WORKS IN PROGRESS

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Has Evergreen misled the public on biomass?

by Mike Coday

Governor Chris Gregoire's office announced grants of 31 million dollars as part of the State Jobs Act Awards on October 7, 2010. At the top of the list with the largest single grant award was a grant to the Evergreen State College (TESC) for 3.7 million dollars to "Install a biomass gasification plant that will allow the college to significantly reduce its dependence on fossil fuels and replace failing steam converters, steam valves and condensate piping." Jason Wettstein at TESC has stated that this application was submitted to the State in September. Evergreen issued no press release regarding this grant funding, and Wettstein was unable to cite a single instance in which TESC received a grant of this size and did not issue a press release.

Evergreen continues to claim that they are engaged in a feasibility study of the biomass conversion and have made no decision at this time to proceed with the construction of the biomass plant. When asked about the feasibility study, Jason Wettstein responded on November 4:

> *"We indicated to* Works in Progress *previously that we would be exploring funding for this project in parallel with our feasibility study, but that we would return funds if we find this project is not feasible with regard to sustainability criteria. That has not changed. Use of grant funds for construction is contingent upon our being convinced that we have found a more sustainable outcome. Achieving progress toward a carbon-neutral campus is the goal in conducting this feasibility study. The grant topic was not intentionally omitted... we appreciate the opportunity in your publication to emphasize that while achieving funding is part of what would make this project feasible, it is far from the sole or most important criterion. Funding gathered will be returned if the technology under consideration does not meet the goal of bringing us closer to carbon neutrality."*

When the Governor's Office and the Department of Commerce were asked about the possibility that Evergreen's feasibility study might result in the return of this funding, Penny Thomas at Commerce had this to say:

> *"In their application, TESC does not mention the possibility of returning the grant funds to Commerce for any reason, and Commerce did not make the award to TESC with any such stipulation. These Jobs Act projects are sometimes complicated and require state-of-the-art engineering and construction solutions. Additionally, permitting is sometimes problematic. So in the event that any of our grant recipients finds out that their proposed project doesn't meet the design standards or goals that they set out in the application, then it is possible they could "return" the award.*
>
> *Bottom line - this grant was not awarded with the understanding that the grant monies might not be needed. We assume that the project is moving forward. Additionally, we have not had any Jobs Act awards returned to us to date, nor are we aware of any that might not be moving forward as planned."*

TESC held a meeting with an opportunity for the public to speak directly to the Board of Trustees November 17, but failed to broadcast this opportunity across the media and listservs.

TESC spokespersons have not responded to questions about these conflicting stories at deadline.

TESC did hold a public meeting with an opportunity for the public to speak directly to the Evergreen Board of Trustees on Wednesday, November 17, but the spokespersons for Evergreen failed to broadcast this opportunity across the media and listservs that they monitor. Many folks who would have liked the opportunity to speak directly to the Trustees were denied the opportunity. Informed and energized citizens who showed up a minute late to the poorly publicized meeting with the Board of Trustees were denied the opportunity to speak.

Citizens who have doubts about the

▸ **BIOMASS,** continued on page 5

A little history of biomass

Though biomass was included in national clean energy legislation in 2009, the devil is definitely in the details when people describe biomass as a "clean energy source." Fast growing biomass fuels such as grasses or algae could reliably replace the burning of fossil fuels with the promise to help slow the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, but burning of other biomass fuels for energy is essentially regressive.

The incineration or gasification of biomass creates large amounts of new greenhouse gases under a theoretical scheme of carbon neutrality in a time that calls for an absolute reduction of greenhouse gas production. The building climate crisis will force us to get this right sooner or later. When we get it right, biomass will not be part of the solution. It may be ten years before that is clear or it may be 50 years, but in geological and climate change timeframes, that is a bullseye. You are invited to mark my words on that.

The world according to Dana

by Dana Walker

I come today with good news! Amidst all the financial doom and gloom dominating the news lately there is a bright spot in our economy! The Wall Street banks — who were already enjoying record profits whilst everyone else was on their asses because of them — just received yet another windfall! Like the storied magicians of old, the Federal Reserve has just created $600 billion out of thin air! There was nothing — then there was $600 billion! Just like that!

This is like alchemy taken to a cosmic level!

Then, after creating $600 billion out of thin air, they just *gave* it to Goldman Sachs!

Wow, cool! How did they do that? Can *I* get one of those?

This "gift" was given to Goldman Sachs by the head of the New York Fed, William Dudley. Before he was head of the New York Fed, William Dudley worked for Goldman Sachs. Goldman Sachs was Barack Obama's largest campaign contributor. Goldman Sachs was George Bush's largest campaign contributor. Mr. Dudley's predecessor at the New York Fed was Timothy Geithner. Timothy Geithner is now Obama's treasury secretary. Small world, eh?

For purposes of public relations, the stated reason for this rather impressive 'gift' was to encourage the kindly gentlemen at Goldman Sachs to pretty please with sugar on top maybe provide a few small *loans* to a few small *businesspeople* here and there so that maybe they can get *going* and maybe create a few *jobs* that a lot of people could sorely use right about now. I am sure that Mr. Bernanke was very stern and wagged his finger at them. In spite of this, though, the kindly gentlemen at Goldman Sachs instead immediately began "speculating" [i.e. gambling with other people's money] on foreign currencies.

Wow. Nice work if you can get it, eh? These people are *rad!* This scam puts *Midas* to shame! (Look what happened to *him* after all!) Rumpelstiltskin was a *piker* compared to these guys! How long would it have taken *him* to weave $600 billion out of straw? And these guys don't even need any *straw!*

Doesn't anyone see what is happening here? Our economy just collapsed because a bunch of sociopathic paper shufflers stole everything. They just looted the whole world and they are draining it dry. The "official" story is that the Wall Street speculators "lost" [i.e. stole] trillions of dollars of other people's money.

The victims of the crime were the good

▸ **DANA,** continued on page 12

Crazy Country

by Adam Keller

Adam Keller is a long-time Israeli peace activist and the spokesperson for Gush Shalom, an organization that calls for a Palestinian state with pre-1967 borders. What follows are excerpts from his blog "Crazy Country." You can follow his blog at adam-keller2.blogspot.com.

At last, some truth in politics

"Eighteen years we are negotiating with the Palestinians while building settlements. Why should we suddenly change it?", so asked Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.

True enough. For eighteen years the state of Israel is building and expanding the settlements while negotiating with the Palestinians, and indeed from the negotiations nothing came. Only the settlements have expanded (even more).

Gideon Orwell

George Orwell described in his famous "1984" a monstrous tyrannical regime which calls everything by an opposite word. The distributors of lying propaganda are called "Ministry of Truth," the constant wars are run by the "Ministry of Peace," and the dreaded secret police is managed from the "Ministry of Love."

1984 is long past, but Mr. Gideon Sa'ar, Minister of Education in the State of Israel, has proven himself a worthy Orwell pupil. The Minister of Education announced this week that he intends to formulate "guidelines" which would be imposed on Israel's universities to forbid lecturers from expressing "anti-Zionist positions" of the kind disliked by the minister.

To these guidelines the minister refers by the name "Principles of Academic Freedom."

Solving the housing problem

Uri Elitzur, considered as one of the most articulate and talented writers in the settler camp who had been PM Netanyahu's Bureau Chief, recently spoke eloquently on the problem of steeply-rising housing prices in Israel.

"We can not solve the housing problem by financial tricks. Some 10,000 homes are lacking, so clearly the prices for existing housing will continue to rise. How did this happen? A partial but significant answer: the freeze on housing in Judea and Samaria. The pace of construction at communities in Judea and Samaria fell down by about 1500 per annum, and this has already begun in the time of Sharon and Olmert. 1500 families who would have been living in the West Bank are now looking for an apartment in Petah Tikva, Jerusalem or Holon. After five years, 7500 apartments are lacking, and prices across the country are going wild." (Makor Rishon, 29/10/2010)

Of course, it might have been possible to suggest solving the problem by having the government apply its construction budgets in Petah Tikva, Jerusalem and Holon. But one should not confuse Mr. Elitzur with simplistic solutions.

The Incitement Index

A few months ago the rabbis Yitzhak Shapira and Yosef Elitzur of Yitzhar Settlement published the book "Torat Hamelech" (The King's Torah) which won the support and encouragement of several other famous rabbis, and gained fairly wide circulation at some circles in Israel and the settlements.

"The King's Torah" lists some situations in which, according to the authors, the act of Jews killing "Gentiles" would be permissible (or even praiseworthy) under the precepts of the Jewish religion.

Among other things, Rabbis Shapira and Elitzur wrote: "From the verse 'Thou shalt not kill', you cannot draw the conclusion that there exists a prohibition on the killing of Gentiles. Regarding the killing of babies and children, it can be concluded that it is permissible to deliberately harm also infants and completely innocent people. It can be said that this is also to their own benefit, since otherwise they would grow up in an improper way and we would have to kill them anyway. They would grow up to become people who deserve death and for whom there is no room in the world, so it is best to kill them already now."

http://lolagizanut.wordpress.com/english/

This week, at long last, marked the launching of the "Index of Incitement" project, on which Prime Minister Netanyahu and his aides have been working for almost a year. A team of senior officials led by Ron Dermer, Netanyahu's political advisor, and retired Brigadier General Yossi Kuperwasser have carefully monitored and recorded unsympathetic statements made by Palestinians. They are to be published and widely distributed, divided into four major categories: explicit incitement to violence, encouraging the creation of an atmosphere of violence and terror, promoting hatred and demonization and failing to prepare the hearts for a positive change.

Of course, this project is limited solely to monitoring Palestinian performance in the field of incitement. Still, it is worthwhile to ask Nethanyhau's experts in which of their four categories they would have placed "The King's Torah."

The square was full

Yitzhak Rabin. The man who spent most of his life in wars. The officer who participated in the expulsion of Arab villagers near Jerusalem in 1948, the Chief of Staff who led Israel's armed forces in the 1967 war which started the occupation. The Prime Minister who declared in 1975 "We will meet with the PLO only on the battlefield." The Defense Minister who in 1988 ordered his soldiers "To break the bones of Palestinians rioters." The man whose very name, when mentioned from the podium in peace rallies, was enough to immediately fill the square with a storm of whistles and boos and catcalls. The same square which today bears his name.

Yitzhak Rabin. The man who has shown his ability to change radically when well over the age of seventy. The man who went out to meet with the leader of the PLO, not on the battlefield but on the White House lawn. The Prime Minister who shook hands with Yasser Arafat with the reluctance evident in his face, but who grew into the role of the peacemaker and persisted in it even in the face of mounting difficulties. The first and only prime minister in Israel's history who embraced the simple and very controversial principle that a citizen is a citizen is a citizen, that in a parliamentary democracy the government should rely on the majority of legally elected members of the Knesset duly representing the citizen body – even if they happen to be Arab.

Yitzhak Rabin. The man who said: "I am retired Lieutenant-General Yitzhak Rabin, ID 30743, a soldier in the Israel Defense Forces and a soldier in the army of peace. I, who sent regiments into the fire and soldiers to their deaths, I say to you: today we are embarking on a battle that has no dead and no wounded, no blood and no anguish. This is the only battle that is a pleasure to wage – the battle for peace." Yitzhak Rabin – the man who, not long after saying these words, was killed in that battle.

> The Minister of Education announced he intends to formulate "guidelines" which would forbid Israel's university lecturers from expressing "anti-Zionist positions."

Fifteen years later, could the name and the memory and the way of Yitzhak Rabin still serve to bring the crowds out into the square? The organizers doubted it – and they were proven wrong.

Tens of thousands came to the square, including many teenagers who do not remember the days of Rabin. The events of recent weeks – the collapsing negotiations and flourishing settlements, the racist bills coming daily on the Knesset agenda, and the despicable religious rulings by rabbis, and the provocations at Karmiel and Safed and on the outskirts of Umm al Fahm and in the proclamations of the Foreign Minister of the State of Israel – aroused, more than ever, a longing for the time when Yitzhak Rabin could provide some grounds for hope. After the events of recent weeks, there were quite a lot of people who waited for this opportunity to come out on the street and let their voice be heard, loud and clear.

The square filled up, and above the crowd waved the signs and banners - some printed in advance in large quantities, others hand-written in which considerable effort had been invested: "We will not let democracy be assassinated," "Fascism is on the march," "This government is shameless," "Struggle against the government of darkness – struggle for democracy,"

"Racism erodes the foundations of democracy," "Enough incitement – no more sinister religious fanaticism," "Turn away from evil and do good, seek peace and pursue it," "Arabs and Jews – united in the struggle," "We will not let our mouths be stopped," "We will neither forget nor forgive," "We will never forget who killed and who was murdered," "Rampant Fascism prepares war and bloodbath," "I will not keep silent when my country has changed her face," "Danger – the end of democracy ahead," "Yes to Peace – No to Violence."

"Israel is waiting for Rabin," the campaign slogan which led to Yitzhak Rabin's election victory in 1992, has been resurrected in the Rabin Square of 2010, and copies of it were everywhere.

Israel is still waiting for a new Rabin.

Works In Progress

ESTABLISHED IN 1990 BY THE THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION

Works In Progress is a free, volunteer-operated progressive community newspaper based in Olympia, Washington. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of *Works In Progress* and are solely those of the authors.

Submissions

Please send text as Word attachments. Artwork and photos can be sent electronically or we can scan them for you as camera-ready/black & white.

Works In Progress is committed to stories misrepresented or ignored by the mainstream media. We value local, well-researched news stories, accounts of personal experience and reflections by local authors. Opinion pieces, also valued, are often best supported by facts, examples, and sources, and we encourage writers to include these elements to submissions. We're also looking for graphics, poetry, cartoons, and articles that push the boundaries of conventional journalism.

WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number. Articles may be reprinted. Please cite source.

If your issue isn't being covered in Works In Progress*, it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or haven't found someone else to cover it!)* Send submissions to *olywip@gmail* or mail to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295.

Governing Tool

The following statement is part of the Editorial Policy and is the governing tool for the Anti-Discrimination Clause:

WIP *will make every effort to work with the contributor of material considered by* WIP *to be offensive in order to reach a mutually agreed upon resolution, but* WIP *reserves the right as a last resort to edit or not print submitted material.*

Mission Statement

"Our aim is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on economic, social, and environmental justice. *Works In Progress* is dedicated to providing a voice for those most affected by the exclusionary and unfair practices that seek to silence the oppressed."

Anti-Discrimination Clause

We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

Back Issues

WIP is archived on microfilm by the University of Washington Library. Some issues are held in the Timberland Library system. The last five years are online at www.olywip.org

Workers In Progress

Colby Batts, Jeff Berryhill, Janet Blanding, Dave Campbell, Marylea Coday, Mike Coday, C. J. Conner, Renee Cruickshank, Wally Cuddeford, Christian DesMarets, Ben Gus, Teresa Jennings, Margaret Love, Joe Martineau, Joshua Neuhouser, hali panneton, Bethel Prescott, Maggie Reardon, Creighton Rose, Sandia Slaby, Sylvia Smith, Jeff Sowers, Pat Tassoni, Ryan Tompkins, Diana Valenzuela, Berd Whitlock, Scott Yoos, and room for more...

"You can't have capitalism without racism." - Malcolm X

WIP Schedule

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Proofreading:
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(Be there for the first read!)

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Matt Duran and Margaret Belknap Charged with Perjury

by Ringo

Editor's Note: The Matt and Maggi Support Committee is asking for help from the activist community to defray the legal costs that will be incurred in defense of very unusual perjury charges that have been brought against Matt and Maggi.

What follows is the request for support from that committee. The following statement does not necessarily reflect the views of Matt or Maggi.

I'm writing to you today to ask for your support of two comrades, Matt Duran and Maggi (Margaret) Belknap, who have been charged with perjury in connection with their participation in an anti-police demonstration in Olympia on April 8.

The anti-police march had attendance and support we hadn't seen in years. Of the approximately 50 original participants, 29 people went to jail following a mass arrest. Several people were beaten or pepper-balled, forced to sit on the ground for hours in the cold waiting to be escorted off one by one without being told what they were charged with, without being fed, without being allowed to call attorneys, etc.

Three individuals were initially charged. Paul French was charged with felony assault of an officer, Jami Williams with misdemeanor assault and malicious mischief, and Maggi with felony assault of an officer. We believe the evidence the police presented was fabricated and/or insufficient for conviction. Paul pled no contest and was sentenced to 90 days in jail. He served two months on good behavior. Maggi was sentenced to 30 days, serving 16 on good behavior.

We were all excited when we thought this ordeal was over, but now they are facing new charges. When Maggi was initially charged with two counts of assault of an officer, she testified in her defense. Matt, who was a witness to her arrest, also testified. They both testified that Maggi did not assault the officer and suggested that maybe it was the officer who assaulted her. Two officers testified against her, one of whom was their prime witness. Even he admitted that he couldn't say for sure whether or not she assaulted the officer. She was convicted of one count and acquitted of the other.

Matt and Maggi have now both been charged with one count of first degree felony perjury class B under state law. This is a serious felony and something nobody in Olympia has been charged with before in this context. It's common in court cases to have witnesses who give completely contradictory testimony where nobody is charged with perjury.

The prosecutor is making this charge on the basis that she was convicted. If one were to follow this logic, the officers who testified to the assault should also be charged with perjury as she was acquitted of one charge (and therefore their testimony must have been falsified as well). On the day of trial, the prosecution tried to bring in a witness they had not previously notified the defense about: an officer who had for over a month not realized he witnessed the whole event, now claiming he had seen the alleged assault! He was not allowed to testify, but it is likely he will testify in this case. This officer, Bryan Houser, also unjustly attacked a member of the Olympia community named Pony shortly after attempting to testify during Maggi's initial assault case.

We need to raise a serious amount of funds to bring political pressure, hire attorneys, and do outreach, and we need to raise it in a matter of months. We have to raise $5,000 to pay the retainer for Matt's lawyer and that amount will probably triple if this goes to trial. We all know how crucial yet costly these battles are. If the police can use this tactic successfully, perjury charges will occur much more frequently against those who take the risk of challenging government unaccountability in a public way. While the visible and public presence of the anti-police movement in Olympia was damaged by the loss the State Street ordeal has put on us, the convictions of Maggi and Matt could very well be the straw that breaks the proverbial camel's back. In September, police across Washington State killed six individuals and no officers have been charged for those killings. Most of them haven't had any public investigation whatsoever.

Both Maggi and Matt have been active members of our community and movement for years. Recently Matt had begun organizing copwatches downtown in response to certain events, such as Arts Walk, where "street sweeps" are conducted to harass the houseless and "clean up" the city. Matt regularly volunteers at the Olympia Food Co-Op and helped set up a public computer lab at our local social and activist resource center, Media Island. Maggi was a founding member of Olympia Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), Port Militarization Resistance, and the Olympia Street Medics. She has also been extensively involved in EGYHOP (Emma Goldman Youth and Homeless Outreach Program), a street outreach organization. Maggi also volunteers at Media Island. While we do not find it unusual or unexpected that they have been targeted in this way, it is worth mentioning the greater context that these charges fit into.

To emphasize the seriousness of these charges, under suggested sentencing guidelines, Matt faces 3-6 months and Maggi faces 6-12 (due to her previous assault conviction). Given the political targeting that is already going on, we expect them to push for maximum sentences. Other crimes in the 6-12 month category include: child molestation, extortion, kidnapping, rape, and possessing a stolen firearm. These charges are a big deal and we need major support to fight them.

The support committee that has taken on this task is a small group of dedicated people and we'll make sure every dollar donated goes directly to fighting these charges and supporting Maggi and Matt in jail, should it come to that.

Sincerely,
Ringo
Matt and Maggi Support Committee

Send donations to:

- Make Paypal donations to mattandmaggi@hotmail.com
- Checks and money orders may be sent to Alex Bryan, PO Box 1806, Olympia, WA 98507. Please make out checks to the "State Street 29 Support Committee" and money orders to Alex Bryan.

Contact information:

- mattandmaggi@hotmail.com
- http://mattandmaggi.tumbler.com
- To get text updates, text "follow mattandmaggi" (without quotes) to 40404.

Five supporters of the BDS Movement elected to Olympia Food Co-op Board

from WIP News Service

It may be old news around town by now, but *Works In Progress* has been following this story since August and we want to record the latest chapter.

First, a brief history: The Olympia Food Co-op Board made a decision in July 2010 to implement a boycott of certain goods made in Israel based on the human rights issues surrounding the occupation of Palestinian lands by the State of Israel.

The shockwaves from this decision rattled folks from Lacey to Tel Aviv. Supporters of Israel pulled out all the stops to persuade the Co-op Board to reverse, modify or set aside its decision.. Most recently, the opponents of the boycott made a concerted attempt to place boycott opponents on the Co-op Board, by putting five candidates up for the five seats up for election.

The votes have been counted, and the final tally is as follows:

TJ Johnson - 693 votes
Rochelle Gause - 635 votes
Erin Genia - 568 votes
John Regan - 551 votes
Eric Mapes - 545 votes

Susan Trinin - 315
Teresa Young - 289
Suzanne Shafer - 277
Karen Bray - 255
Kent Davis - 242
Andrea Lipper - 241
Kim Henderson - 219
Linda Sternhill Davis - 195
Joshua Simpson - 132
Susan Schaeffer - 86

The five candidates endorsed by Olympia BDS have been elected (or re-elected) to fill the five open seats on the Co-op Board. Congratulations to TJ Johnson, Rochelle Gause, Erin Genia, John Regan and Eric Mapes!

The process and wording of the Food Co-op's decision to join the boycott called by Palestine may be subject to review, but the votes have been counted and the will of the Co-op membership at large is clear: **Olympia supports the Food Co-op Board's decision to join the Boycott!**

There is a spirit and will alive in Olympia that seeks to move Israel and Palestine toward justice and peace. Shalom, someday we may all share the promised land.

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Open Mike - Bits & Bites

by Mike Coday

Mike rants and blogs at www.the leftcoaster.com when time allows. If you see an interesting news story out there for next month, send it along to Bits and Bites at olywip@gmail.com

Anybody Tired of the War on Drugs?

Nicholas Kristof says, yep, let's give up the war on marijuana at least. He makes some powerful arguments in a piece in the *NY Times* on October 27, noting that the Sentencing Project says that a black man now has a one-in-three chance of serving time in prison thanks in part to drug laws.

Voters spoke in California on November 2 and said "No, the Drug Wars should continue," as they turned down a landmark initiative that would have legalized and taxed marijuana. Our WA State initiative to legalize marijuana missed getting enough signatures to get on the ballot for November.

Mexican President Calderon says he is tired of it and calls for the United States to get its house in order. Calderon says we need to stop the trade in drugs and guns with Mexican crime cartels. The BBC has the story. Did we jump to trade and commerce news?

Market Update

The US sale of planes to the Saudis has lots of folks in the defense industry feeling bullish in bad times. The Obama administration announced a deal worth 60 billion dollars for the sale of F-15 fighter jets and bunker-buster bombs to our oil-wealthy friends in Saudi Arabia who find themselves weighed down with US dollars. Is this a message to Iran or just an attempt to balance trade? The Christian Science Monitor has pretty decent coverage if you want details.

After taking a beating at the polls, Prez Obama rushed to India to push sale of weapons systems to India. It's a threefer: The US could replace Russia as the largest weapons merchant to India, send a message to China, and give our war materials manufacturing sector a reason to believe. Could this create more tension and instability in minor-nuclear power Pakistan? Why worry about that when there are sales of weapons and full-body scanners to be made? The "War is a crime" website expresses some concern at http://warisacrime.org (used to be afterdowningstreet.org)

Fighter jets for peace? Palestinian journalist Daoud Kuttab has the details on the Obama administration's 3 billion dollar trade (bribe?) of 20 advanced fighter planes to Israel in exchange for a 90 day freeze on Israeli settlement construction in Israeli-occupied Palestine. A 90 day freeze on settlements? Is this a serious suggestion for peace or is this just more market news and messaging to Iran? Search at huffingtonpost.com for the details, if you can bear it.

It's a good time to invest in the nuclear weapon industry. President Obama may be able to get the New Start arms control treaty ratified by the Senate if he can commit enough money to the modernization of our nuclear arsenal. Obama has offered $85 billion over the next decade to build the complexes that build modern nuclear weapons to upgrade our antique nuclear weaponry.

It's too bad that Obama did not seize the opportunity he was given by the voters in the 2008 election to commit resources to a meaningful peaceful industrial push like green energy. Too late now. That opportunity has passed and we are locking in dollars to modernize our nuclear arsenal. Was that midterm election an attempt to hold Obama accountable for missing the opportunity of a generation? Who knows, but we are moving on to ...

Accountability News

How about Taser Cams? When a police officer pulls the taser from the holster and unlocks the safety, the camera clicks on and records everything in the line of fire. You can't turn the camera off without disabling the taser shock function. 440 people are known to have died after being tased since records started being kept in 2001. So why not a glock cam for the thin blue line? Is there such a thing as too much accountability? *USA Today* has coverage at www.usatoday.com

Khalid Sheik Mohammed, the current defending world champion of waterboarding torture and future witness in war crime trials, will probably remain in military detention without trial for the foreseeable future according to the Obama administration. The timeline on this story is that Attorney General Eric Holder wanted to try Mohammed in civilian court in New York. Then the administration thought it might be better to towel him off and try him in front of a military tribunal. Now Obama, an un-tenured and sometime professor of Constitutional law, thinks we should just hold him indefinitely. The storyline for this assault on habeas corpus is that there is just too much opposition from local lawmakers in the States to allow a trial to take place. Search at the Washington Post if you need more details: www.washingtonpost.com

As an unannounced cost-cutting measure, the Obama folks have also decided that the Prez has the authority to bypass the US justice system altogether and simply assassinate US citizens when the times call for such action. President Nixon in his wildest dreams was never this bold. This is audacious governance. The Fifth Amendment does have an exception for due process in time of war or public danger. Boy, are we in public danger now.

The jury is in, but you will have to judge the accountability value in the BART police killing of Oscar Grant. Ex-BART cop Johannes Mehserle was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter in the shooting death of Oscar Grant. Grant, who was unarmed, was shot in the back and killed as he lay face down on a BART transit platform. Do I need to tell you that Mehserle is white and Grant was black? Mehserle can now petition for a probation sentence. http://colorlines.com has coverage. I don't think we can stand any more accountability news, lets switch to cost-cutting and government efficiency, shall we?

Austerity News Update

The presidential deficit commission headed by long-time political operatives and millionaires (coincidence?) Alan Simpson and Erskine Bowles recommended an austerity program to address the national deficit that included raising the age of eligibility for Social Security and raising the wage cap subject to Social Security taxes. How about simply having no cap on wages subject to Social Security taxes? Apparently not in the cards when we can squeeze middle and low-income folks in the name of fiscal responsibility. Watch out for a really lame duck session of Congress.

Ireland's plan to deal with its debt crisis did not address the banking crisis according to opposition party, Fine Gael, but it did commit to social welfare and public sector salary and pension benefits and increases in income and other taxes. 13,000 public sectors jobs are expected to disappear. The disaster of the Chicago school of economics has not yet revived Keynsian economics that have proved helpful in past downturns. The Independent and the Guardian have coverage.

How about a little something from Mr. Keynes: "John Maynard Keynes believed that depressions were recessions that had fallen into a liquidity trap. A liquidity trap is when people hoard money and refuse to spend no matter how much the government tries to expand the money supply. In these dire circumstances, Keynes believed that the government should do what individuals were not, namely, spend. In his memorable phrase, Keynes called this "priming the pump" of the economy, a final government effort to reestablish the circular flow of money." The recent election, the ascendance of folks who would like to reduce public sector employment and social welfare programs has a faint smell of the liquidity trap to me. Steve Kangas has some pretty good stuff posted at http://huppi.com/kangaroo/tenets.htm if you care to learn more.

Election news

In a midterm election now largely defined as a referendum on President Obama and flooded with anonymous corporate Citizens United dollars, the Democrats were beaten to a pulp by a party whose ideas and public policies promise to plunge the country deeper into recession. Austerity and tax cuts here we come. If you aren't a fat cat, you better get ready to tighten the belt. There are rumors of another national election in 2012. If tax cuts and deregulation was going to make us all prosper how come there are so many folks out of work and struggling to get by?

The Olympia Food Co-op Board election is over and the support of the community for the boycott of Israeli products has been reaffirmed. Opponents of the boycott who can't tell the difference between a movement for human rights and anti-semitism are encouraged to get help. "The arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice." ML King, Jr. Has the Olympia Food Co-op bent the arc of history toward justice? Time will tell, but the work continues, history does not bend itself. No war is needed.

News from the War Fronts

After nine years of war, the Defense Department is now sending the big guns to Afghanistan. Apparently we have been holding the MIA1 Abrams tanks out of the battle zones, but no more. We are now sending these 72 ton vehicles into Afghanistan. Does this sound like a war that is winding down? The Beeb has coverage at www.bbc.co.uk

Peace talks with the Taliban appear to have taken a hit when it became apparent that the spokesman who was negotiating for the Taliban was probably not Taliban Guy #2, Akhtar Mohammed Mansour. Apparently nobody noticed immediately that the guy was a few inches short and did not match the appearance of Mansour. The imposter received a six figure sum of money and had three meetings with NATO and Afghan officials before the ruse was detected. The Brits are getting the blame and Ben Farmer at the Telegraph has coverage at www.telegraph.co.uk

Drone wars

I guess we have two primary options for dealing with folks, we either try to buy them out as in the Mansour story just above or we send in the Drones. Common Dreams reports that President Obama is negotiating with Pakistan to increase the areas where the US can fire drone weapons on targets within Pakistan. Domestic opposition is growing in Pakistan to the strikes on Pakistani soil. I think if we look back at Vietnam and Cambodia, it may become apparent that bombing a country sometimes fails to persuade the population to embrace peace with the bombers. Sometimes the population on the ground takes the bombings personally and digs in for a long fight. War planning does not seem to have evolved much, but...

Warfare is evolving, no question about that. The first clear battle in cyberwar may have been identified. The Stuxnet computer worm that hit computers in the summer of 2009 has been analyzed and is found to have been quite specifically designed to cause Iranian centrifuges used to enrich uranium to fly apart. The source of Stuxnet remains unknown, the suspects include to be Israel and/or the United States. Stuxnet is perfectly designed to take over frequency converters of electric motors and particularly the frequency converters of two companies, Fararo Paya in Iran and Vacon from Finland. The *NYT* has the story: "Worm Was Perfect for Sabotaging Centrifuges" from November 18th. Some may think it's a case of the ends justifying the means if it slows or prevents nuclear proliferation, but if an unhappy country or company (are these interchangeable today?) launches a counterattack to retaliate, we may experience blowback and be unhappy or worse. But the war we have really been losing for the past few decades is the...

Class War

Where to start?

Unemployment extension blocked – As we go to print, Congress is deciding whether to extend unemployment benefits for the holiday season. One thing about unemployment benefits is they will get spent, not hoarded in a liquidity trap. Will common sense, compassion and basic economic principles lead to an extension of unemployment benefits or are we jumping on the austerity train for the holidays? Wait and see.

Tax cuts to the wealthy are at the top of the gift list for the incoming Congress. An extension of the Bush tax cuts

▸ **CONTINUED** on next page

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will allow the top 1% of US taxpayers to buy a new Mercedes each year for the next ten years. How's that for an economic stimulus? The top 1% of tax earners making an average of 1.4 million dollars per year will get an extra tax refund of $83,347 per year for the next ten years. Outgoing representative Alan Grayson can break it down for you. The story is at OpEdNews.com: "What The Rich Might Do with Their Tax Cut."

Organized labor is caving in to a two-tier wage system that makes blue collar workers in the US more competitive with sweatshop labor around the planet. Even furloughed and laid-off workers will come back to jobs with a lower pay scale when they are called back. Hmm... let's see, lay them all off for a short time, call them back at lower wage, could that help fund executive bonuses? Louis Uchitelle at the *NYT* has that story: search for "unions yield" at www.nytimes.com for the details. Let's wrap up with...

The Weather Report

Governor Michael Rounds of South Dakota says they have had a run of bad weather. Yes, I guess so. The *NY Times* has coverage and says seven presidential disaster declarations for extreme weather have been made so far this year. A tornado in May was on the ground near Bowdle, SD. Record hailstorms hit Vivian, SD in November. It's a red state and they are not ready to assume extreme weather is persuasive with regard to global warming, but...

The New York Times reports that the City of Norfolk, Virginia is at the front line of rising sea levels. The *Times* claims there are few global warming skeptics in residence as the community tries to raise itself by 18 inches to avoid routine flooding at high tide. Coastline communities that are trying to figure out how to afford some pretty expensive public works projects to deal with rising sea level are difficult for the skeptics. Here at home in Puget Sound, we need to start asking how we are going to respond to rising sea levels. Just saying "we won't abandon downtown Olympia" is not a plan for dealing with rising sea level.

▸ **BIOMASS,** continued from page 1

wisdom of biomass power generation are organizing at this point to request that the Governor's office and the Department of Commerce freeze the funds for construction of the Evergreen biomass plant pending an investigation of whether Evergreen misrepresented the status of the project in their grant application to the Department of Commerce. A move to ask the Evergreen Board of Trustees to schedule another open meeting with the public is also underway. If you wish to join the call for the State to freeze these funds you are encouraged to leave a respectful message to the Governor at http://www.governor.wa.gov/contact/

For more information on that process or to learn more about why people oppose biomass, visit the following websites:

www.nobiomassburn.org – Biomass opposition in Washington State

http://sheltonblog.net/ - Biomass opposition in Mason County

www.nobiomass.org – Biomass opposition in Wisconsin

www.nobiomassburning.org – Biomass opposition in Massachusetts

http://www.nobiomass.com - Biomass opposition in Australia

For comprehensive coverage of the local biomass story, read Janine Gates' article: Biomass Issue Becomes a Public Relations 'Biomess' for The Evergreen State College at http://janineslittlehollywood.blogspot.com/ posted on November 24, 2010.

We are all Mumia

by Betsey Piette, Workers World

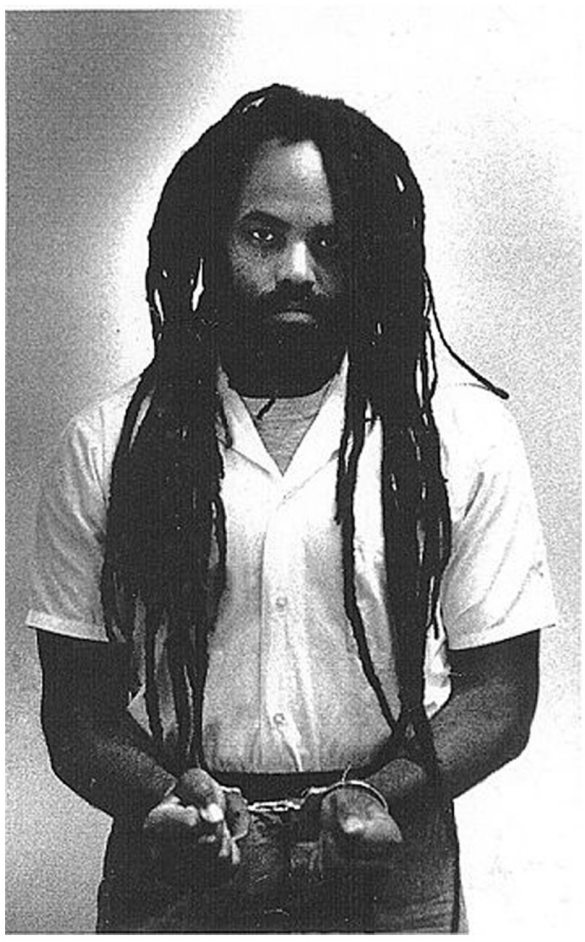
More than 500 people, mostly African-American and youth, mobilized for an outdoor rally Nov. 9 here in support of political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. The rally lasted through a 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals hearing on whether the death sentence would be reinstated for Abu-Jamal, who has maintained his innocence since being railroaded to death row for the 1981 killing of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner.

Abu-Jamal's supporters included a delegation from the Transport Workers Union Local 100; Charles Barron, the New York Freedom Party gubernatorial candidate; Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition NYC; International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal; and the International Action Center. Activists traveled from as far away as California, Texas, Arizona, Germany, France and Russia.

Shenice Morris told Workers World that she and two other high school students missed school to attend: "We are not going to sit down and be oppressed. Mumia's case is an example of just how corrupt this government is. We are tired of the attacks on the African-American community. It has to stop."

Larry Holmes with the Bail Out the People Movement stated: "We are all Mumia. We want to see Mumia walk out as a free man. We will not give up until that happens. Around the world Mumia has come to symbolize the struggles of African-Americans for freedom and against oppression."

Inside the court, a three-judge panel convened to re-examine their 2008 decision regarding confusion over jury instructions in the sentencing phase of Abu-Jamal's 1982 trial. Two years ago these judges, finding that the jury had been given flawed and misleading instructions, upheld an earlier decision by Judge William Yohn to vacate the death sentence. Yohn's decision left Abu-Jamal in prison for life without the possibility of parole.



However in January 2010 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a lower court order vacating the death sentence in another case had been in error. That case, which also focused on confusing language on a jury ballot form and misleading instructions to the jury, involved neo-Nazi Frank Spizak, who was sentenced to death for the random killings of Black and Jewish people.

An appeal of the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decision in Abu-Jamal's case, filed by the Philadelphia district attorney, was pending in the Supreme Court. After ruling against Spizak, the court sent Abu-Jamal's appeal back to the 3rd Circuit, asking them to review their decision in light of the Spizak ruling.

While Assistant District Attorney Hugh Burns tried to argue that the issues in Abu-Jamal's case were "almost identical" to those in Spizak's, Widener University law professor Judith Ritter, arguing for Abu-Jamal, countered that the two jury forms were "fundamentally different." Ritter successfully argued the same issue before these judges in 2008.

At a press conference following the hearing, Professor Johanna Fernandez with Educators for Mumia said she "found it very disturbing that the court was obsessive over semantics and insignificant details, without being willing to consider the case as a whole — the overwhelming evidence of innocence and the totality of violations of Mumia's legal and constitutional rights."

No decision is expected until 2011, but even if the judges uphold their 2008 decision, the district attorney's office can appeal again to the Supreme Court. And the Supreme Court could vote to reverse the lower court and reinstate the death penalty.

If the Supreme Court chooses not to take the case or lets the lower court ruling stand, the district attorney would have to decide whether to seek a new penalty-phase trial or to leave Abu-Jamal with a life sentence. A new trial would give Abu-Jamal the chance to introduce new evidence regarding the killing.

It's clear that support for Abu-Jamal cannot be allowed to waiver. Supporters vowed to intensify a campaign demanding that Attorney General Eric Holder conduct an investigation into the numerous violations of Abu-Jamal's civil rights.

Justice debated

The high energy at the rally was fueled by an event the night before where two Abu-Jamal supporters, Fernandez and attorney Michael Coard, took on Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams and filmmaker Tigre Hill in a debate on the case.

Hill, who is African-American, had previewed his anti-Abu-Jamal, pro-Fraternal-Order-of-Police film, "The Barrel of a Gun," to a mostly white audience of cops and politicians in September. He set up the Nov. 8 debate to follow a screening of his film at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia the night before Abu-Jamal's hearing.

It's hard to believe Hill did not anticipate that Abu-Jamal supporters would pack the hall, or that Fernandez and Coard would trounce him and Williams, but that's exactly what happened.

Hill's film claims that Abu-Jamal conspired with his brother, William Cook, to murder Faulkner because Abu-Jamal was a former member of the Black Panther Party and a supporter of the MOVE Organization that "always wanted to kill police."

Long on innuendo but seriously short on facts, "The Barrel of a Gun" presents a one-sided portrayal of the revolutionary Black movements of the 1960s and 1970s as a group of "violent, extremist, communist-sympathizing radicals out to kill cops."

There is never any mention of the rampant police repression against the Black and Latino/a communities, nor of the widespread corruption that eventually led to federal investigations of the Philadelphia police department. Hill ignores the fact that Black Panther Party members carried guns in self-defense after dozens of their comrades were killed by police.

Williams tried to minimize the facts as well, repeating a refrain that "four witnesses said they saw Mumia shoot Faulkner" and 'Mumia confessed." When Williams said, "We're bound by the facts," he was greeted by jeers from the audience.

Fernandez responded that the prosecution's star witness, Cynthia White, initially picked out Kenneth Freeman, a passenger in William Cook's car, in a lineup. Police coerced White to change her testimony. Fernandez noted that 15 of the police involved in collecting evidence in Abu-Jamal's case were brought up on corruption charges for evidence tampering in other cases, but the jury was not told that.

Fernandez has produced another documentary on the case entitled "Justice on Trial." She challenged Williams and Hill to "stick to the facts in the case, not the ones you make up."

Coard spoke of the inherent racism in the U.S. and compared Abu-Jamal's case to those of thousands of other Black and poor people who are railroaded through the judicial system without adequate representation or juries of their peers. Coard noted that the police failed to perform gun residue tests on Abu-Jamal's hands to prove he had even fired a gun the night Faulkner was shot.

Coard also pointed out that Abu-Jamal's attorney during the original trial, Anthony Williams, was eventually disbarred.

Seemingly nervous that the debate was not going his way, Hill left the stage at one point to be coached on the sideline. He returned with yet another lie: that Abu-Jamal's former attorney, Robert Bryan, "was going to argue for self-defense." Fernandez and the audience booed this outright lie.

A highlight of the debate came when Coard stood up and hand-delivered an order charging Hill with copyright infringement for using substantial footage from the film "Black and Blue" without obtaining permission from its owner, Hugh King. "Black and Blue" focuses on police brutality in Philadelphia. The order instructed Hill to cease screening and disseminating his film and to destroy all copies or risk a lawsuit.

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Discussing the state of Washington's banking system with Dan Leahy

Interview by Mike Coday

Mike Coday: Yo*u contacted* Works In Progress *in November with an idea for an article on banking and you had some interesting numbers on the financial crisis. Can you tell us a little about yourself, your background and training on finance and economics, please?*

Dan Leahy: I taught public policy, political economy and social movements for twenty-five years at the Evergreen State College. I retired in December 2008, and for the last two years I have been interested in banks. I am also interested in starting a publicly owned Washington State bank.

Mike: *So what piqued your interest in banking in the past few years?*

Dan: I got interested when Hank Paulson and his friends in the banking world crashed the U.S. economy in the fall of 2008. Paulson had no problem asking for somebody else's $700 billion dollars to bail them out. Congress gave him the cash – no strings attached – in order to stabilize the system and provide liquidity to banks — all in the name of the American homeowner — because this collapse started when the real estate financial bubble burst.

That $700 billion was not enough, by the way, so the Federal Reserve bought $1.7 trillion of their toxic assets called mortgage backed securities or collateral debt obligations. And, more recently, on November 4, the Federal Reserve pledged to give them $600 billion more by buying Treasury bonds.

It is amazing how the rich love government. No wonder they teach the rest of us to hate it.

Did Hank and his friends get stabilized and liquid? Yes. The 17 banks with $100 billion or more in assets got 81% of the largest allocation in the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP). They are now all very stable, very liquid and reporting record profits.

What did we get? The people whose name was used to open the federal coffers? The big bankers took our homes, our wealth, our jobs, our businesses, our public services, and many of our local community banks. Now the banks want our kids' retirement system, Social Security.

By the end of 2007, 2 million Americans had lost their homes and 4 million more were in danger of foreclosure. Between 1998 and 2006, African-Americans lost between $71 billion and $93 billion in asset values due to the subprime loan scam. U.S. households lost $11 trillion in value in 2008. One-third of American homeowners are in a negative equity position. Five million lost their jobs in the early part of 2009. Lending froze and small businesses can't get financing. Smaller banks started to fail; 94 of them failed in 2009.

Wall Street bonuses, however, added up to $32 billion in January 2008.

Mike: *It's really hard to comprehend the idea of $32 billion in 2008 Wall Street bonus income given the financial implosion that was underway. Can you give us a little history lesson on the federal banking bailout?*

Dan: Sure, let's look at the Troubled Asset Relief Fund, or TARP.

First, on the national scale: In October 2008, Congress authorized the U.S. Treasury to spend up to $700 billion through TARP. The largest use of these funds was to pump nearly $205 billion into 707 banks.

Seventeen banks with $100 billion or more in assets received 81% of this $205 billion. All but four of these banks have paid the money back to the Treasury and are reporting record profits.

690 smaller banks got the rest, or $40 billion dollars. Only 64 of these banks have paid back the Treasury, so 626 banks still have $24.9 billion outstanding. *(Congressional Oversight Panel - July 14, 2010 report)*

Elizabeth Warren, Chair, of the Congressional Panel overseeing TARP, wrote in her first report, on December 10, 2008, "All Americans have the right to ask: Who got the money, what have they done with it, how has it helped the country and how has it helped ordinary people?"

By the end of the TARP program, sixteen Bank Holding Companies (BHC) that are based in Washington State had received TARP funds, close to $1 billion or a little more than $975.2 million. The sixteen BHCs have 19 subsidiary banks in Washington State, and that's where we can start to see the ongoing problem.

In her July 2010 Report, Elizabeth Warren pointed out that the TARP program worked well for the banks with $100 billion or more in assets, but that it may be injurious to the smaller banks, and may create a more concentrated and dangerous banking system at the local level through bank failures and mergers.

Smaller banks have a more difficult time raising the funds to pay back the U.S. Treasury, even though there is a built-in incentive for them to do this. These banks now pay a 5% quarterly dividend to the Treasury. In 2013, they must pay a 9% quarterly dividend.

Unlike the banks with $100 billion in assets, these smaller banks have a more difficult time accessing capital markets to obtain new capital. Half of these smaller banks are privately held and have no access to public capital markets. Many of the rest are "thinly traded," meaning infrequently or in small batches, and given the economic hard times will find it difficult to raise funds on capital markets.

There are fourteen banks in Washington State that still owe TARP funds to the U.S. Treasury. Two banks have paid back the U.S. Treasury. The two that paid the TARP funds back are the BHC of the Columbia State Bank of Tacoma and the BHC of the Washington Federal Savings and Loan of Seattle.

The outstanding TARP funds owed to the U.S. Treasury by the fourteen remaining bank holding companies total about $698.4 million dollars.

There are indicators that some of these banks might be in trouble. One of the indicators is missed dividend payments to the US Treasury. 106 BHCs have missed payments. Five of these BHCs are in Washington State.

There are two other indicators that suggest some of these 14 TARP Banks might be in trouble. One indicator is a Troubled Asset Ratio, or TAR. The TAR was developed by the Investigative Re-

▸ **CONTINUED** on next page

Unlike banks with $100 billion in assets, smaller banks have a more difficult time accessing capital markets to obtain new capital.

BHC banks that received TARP funds

Spokane	Sterling Svg/Golf Svg	12/05/08	$303.0 million
Walla Walla	Islanders/Banner Bank	11/21/08	$124.0 million
Spokane	Washington Trust Bank	01/30/09	$110.0 million
Everett	Cascade Bank	11/21/08	$ 38.9 million
Oak Harbor	Whidbey Island Bank	01/16/09	$ 26.3 million
Olympia	Heritage/Central Valley	11/21/08	$ 24.0 million
Lynden	Peoples Bank	02/13/09	$ 18.0 million
Hoquiam	Timberland Bank	12/23/08	$ 16.6 million
Spokane	Inland NW Bank	02/13/09	$ 10.5 million
Seattle	First Sound Bank	12/23/08	$ 7.4 million
Tacoma	Pierce Commercial	01/23/09	$ 6.8 million
Seattle	Pacific International	12/12/08	$ 6.5 million
Bellevue	Puget Sound Bank	01/16/09	$ 4.5 million
Lakewood	NW Commercial	02/13/09	$ 1.9 million

Washington TARP BHC'S missing dividend payments (07/10/2010)

Sterling Financial Corporation	Spokane	4	$ 15,150.000.00
Cascade Financial Corporation	Everett	3	$ 1,461,375.00
Pierce County Bancorp	Tacoma	3	$ 377,950.00
Pacific International Bancorp	Seattle	4	$ 325,000.00
Timberland Bancorp, Inc.	Hoquiam	1	$ 208,012.00
			$ 17,522,337.00

A little bit on banking, regulation, and deregulation history from *WIP*

In 1933, the United States banking system largely collapsed, wiping out both investors and individuals who simply had funds on deposit in the banks that failed. In response to the banking system collapse, Congress passed the Banking Act of 1933, commonly known as the Glass Steagall Act. Glass Steagall regulated banks and separated investment and commercial banking and established the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) that insured deposits in financial institutions to a certain dollar amount. Glass Steagall produced a solid and solidly regulated banking system.

In the 1980s and 1990s this country experienced a crisis in the savings and loan industry. During the S&L crisis 747 savings and loans institutions failed. Deregulation of savings and loans prior to the crisis gave S&Ls the functions of banks without the same level of regulation. The Federal Government under President George H. Bush is estimated to have spend about 124 billion dollars to bail out the savings and loan industry. 1.3 billion dollars went to Silverado Savings and Loan. Neil Bush, son of President George H. Bush and brother of future President George W. Bush was on the Board of Directors of Silverado Savings and Loan. In response to the S&L crisis Congress passed the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery and Enforcement Act of 1989.

In the 1990s President Bill Clinton and a Republican Congress engaged in a deregulation spree that included a repeal of Glass Steagall and set the stage for Enron, Worldcom, AIG, and the mortgage credit default speculation economic bubble that burst in 2008

Generally absent from this dismal American banking history are the institutions chartered as credit unions. Are credit unions inherently more stable and less speculative than the other financial institutions? Credit unions are not-for-profit cooperatives that are member-owned and generally run by mostly volunteer boards. Credit unions have been hurt by economic ups and downs, and some are holding toxic assets today. There are significant differences between banks and credit unions, and there don't seem to have been any financial crises in the United States that originated in the credit union industry and their credit practices.

Thirteen Washington banks with over 100 TAR ratio (06/2010)

1.	Seattle Bank	Seattle	265.90
2.	First Sound Bank	Seattle	204.30
3.	Home Street Bank	Seattle	182.80
4.	America West Bank	Spokane	177.30
5.	Viking Bank	Seattle	165.60
6.	Regal Financial	Seattle	160.40
7.	Sterling Savings	Spokane	156.10
8.	Business Bank	Burlington	149.10
9.	Westside Community	University Place	139.60
10.	Bank of Washington	Lynnwood	134.50
11.	Mountain Pacific	Everett	133.30
12.	First Heritage Bank	Snohomish	131.50
13.	Bank of Whitman	Colfax	112.50

porting Workshop at American University. The TAR is derived by adding the amounts of loans past due 90 days or more, loans in non-accrual status, and other real estate owned (primarily properties obtained through foreclosure), and dividing that amount by the bank's capital and loan loss reserves. It is reported as a percentage. This statistic is not an FDIC statistic. The lower the ratio, the more healthy the bank is thought to be.

Two of these banks, First Sound Bank of Seattle and Sterling Savings out of Spokane have TAR ratios of 204.30 and 156.10, respectively, as of June 2010. Banks with a TAR ratio of over 100 tend to fail.

Another indicator of trouble is bank failure itself. Only four TARP-recipient banks had failed nationally. However, on November 5, Pierce Commercial, a Washington bank that had received $6.8 million in TARP funds, failed. Pierce Commercial has now been acquired by Heritage Bank of Olympia.

Mike: *So, tell us a little about bank failure. How common is bank failure? What problems does bank failure pose to the community or an individual? Why should we care if a few small banks fail?*

Dan: Well, in January 2007 there were 97 state-chartered banks with headquarters in Washington State. Since that time to the present date, fourteen of these banks have failed leaving 83 banks.

Of those fourteen failed banks, seven were purchased by out of state banks and seven by other Washington state chartered banks. Umpqua Bank of Roseburg, Oregon has purchased three banks: Bank of Clark County, Evergreen Bank and Rainier Bank. Heritage Bank of Olympia has purchased two banks: The Cowlitz Bank and the Pierce Commercial Bank. Whidbey Island has purchased two: City Bank and North County.

Of the 94 banks that failed in 2009, 84 had "troubled assets of 100 percent or greater in the final quarter they reported data before they closed," according to the Investigative Reporting Workshop, American University, which developed the TAR ratio.

There are thirteen banks in Washington State with a TAR Ratio of 100 or over, as of June 2010. Two banks, Seattle Bank and First Sound Bank, both based in Seattle, have a TAR Ratio of over 200, as of June 2010.

When the FDIC decides that a bank is in trouble, it issues a Cease and Desist Order that is designed to ensure financial institutions follow prudent banking practices. The FDIC issued 18 Cease and Desist Orders to Washington banks in 2009. Of those 18 banks, six have subsequently failed: North County, Venture, Horizon, Rainier Pacific, Washington First International and the Bank of Tacoma, had its order terminated in 2010.

This leaves 11 banks where the 2009 Cease and Desist Order has not been terminated, as of this date. These banks are: Business Bank, Regal Financial, Sterling Savings, Mountain Pacific, City Bank, Seattle Bank, American West Bank, Anchor Mutual, Twin City Bank, Home Street Bank and First Security Bank of Washington.

And we have 13 banks with a TAR score greater than 100 as of June, 2010.

There are 22 banks in Washington that have a TAR ratio that is lower than the National median of 15%, as of June, 2010.

Here is a table showing the TAR scores over time on the banks that have failed:

Mike: *Thank you, Dan, for this detailed look at the banking situation and thanks for your call on the State to pass a moratorium on foreclosures in Washington State while this mess gets straightened out.*

Information on Troubled Asset Ratios and TARP funds was obtained from the Investigative Reporting Workshop at American University School of Communication. You can look up any bank by going to their website: http://banktracker.investigativereportingworkshop.org/banks/washington

You can also look up enforcement actions by the FDIC on its website, as well as a list of bank failures and which banks acquired the failed bank: www.fdic.gov

A call for a statewide moratorium on foreclosures

by Dan Leahy

Two days after the American people threw out the Democrats for their complicity in the trillion dollar bailout of the fraudulent financial sector, the Federal Reserve (The Fed) added insult to injury by announcing another $600 billion dollar gift that will give banks more free money for financial speculation.

Will the debt ridden American homeowner, the laid off worker or the credit starved small business owner see any of this money?

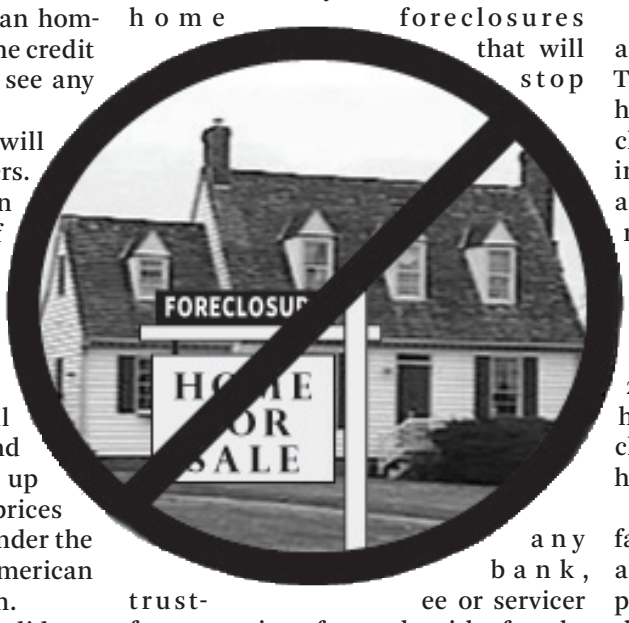
The Fed says yes, the money will reach citizens and taxpayers. They said the same thing when they gave out $700 billion of TARP (Troubled Asset Relief Program) funds under Bush, $1.7 billion under Obama and now $600 billion more. Why will it help us, we ask?

The Fed says the banks will take all that easy money and lend it to us. We'll take it and buy up homes. This will raise housing prices and that will get us out from under the negative equity one-third of American homeowners find themselves in.

The truth is, of course, banks did not start lending to us even after the Fed purchased their valueless mortgage backed securities for $1.7 trillion, even when the Fed let banks borrow at close to a zero percent interest rate. And, they won't lend to us now. Why? They'll make more money buying up foreign assets in economies with high growth rates and speculating on foreign currencies. Obama left for Asia right after the election because that's where the $600 billion is headed.

The underlying problem that the Fed and Obama refuse to face is that the debts caused by the fictitious housing bubble cannot be paid. People are broke, unemployed, and spending whatever income they have on housing costs and debt service. The banks have to write off this debt and start over. Obama and the bankers obviously did not hear the people on November 2. Let's see if our state government can hear us.

We must ask the State to legislate an immediate five-year moratorium on home foreclosures that will stop any bank, trustee or servicer from moving forward with foreclosure proceedings against any owner-occupied home in Washington State. Included in this legislation must be a procedure for writing down mortgages when the market value of the home is less than the mortgage owed.



Such a moratorium will provide judicial and banking regulators sufficient time to assist homeowners in the negotiation of mortgages, so people can begin making payments on real mortgages rather than on the inflated fictitious ones.

A moratorium will allow for the judicious investigation of foreclosure fraud by the State's Attorney General, so that those people who have purchased or want to purchase a foreclosed home can know with some assurance the sale won't be challenged in court.

Finally, a moratorium will give the citizens of Washington State time to reassess their economic position without having to worry about losing their homes.

The foreclosure crisis is deepening, and it's not going away. The Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue metropolitan district had the largest annual increase in foreclosure activity this past year, according to the foreclosure listing firm Realty Trac. One in every 129 households received a foreclosure filing. Washington State has the 14th highest foreclosure rate in the nation. The Center for Responsible Lending calculates a total of 132,092 foreclosures through 2012 and the loss of $19.5 billion in home equity wealth due to nearby foreclosures affecting 2,104,655 million homes.

There is no way around it. We have to face reality. It was a housing bubble that allowed the big banks and their employees to make billions. It burst, and the bad debt they left us with cannot be paid. A statewide moratorium will provide us with time and a procedure to face that fact, write down the debt and get back to creating an economy that employs people at living wages.

Dan Leahy is a retired faculty member from The Evergreen State College, where he taught for twenty-five years primarily in the political economy and social movement curriculum. He lives on the Westside of Olympia with his wife, Bethany Weidner.

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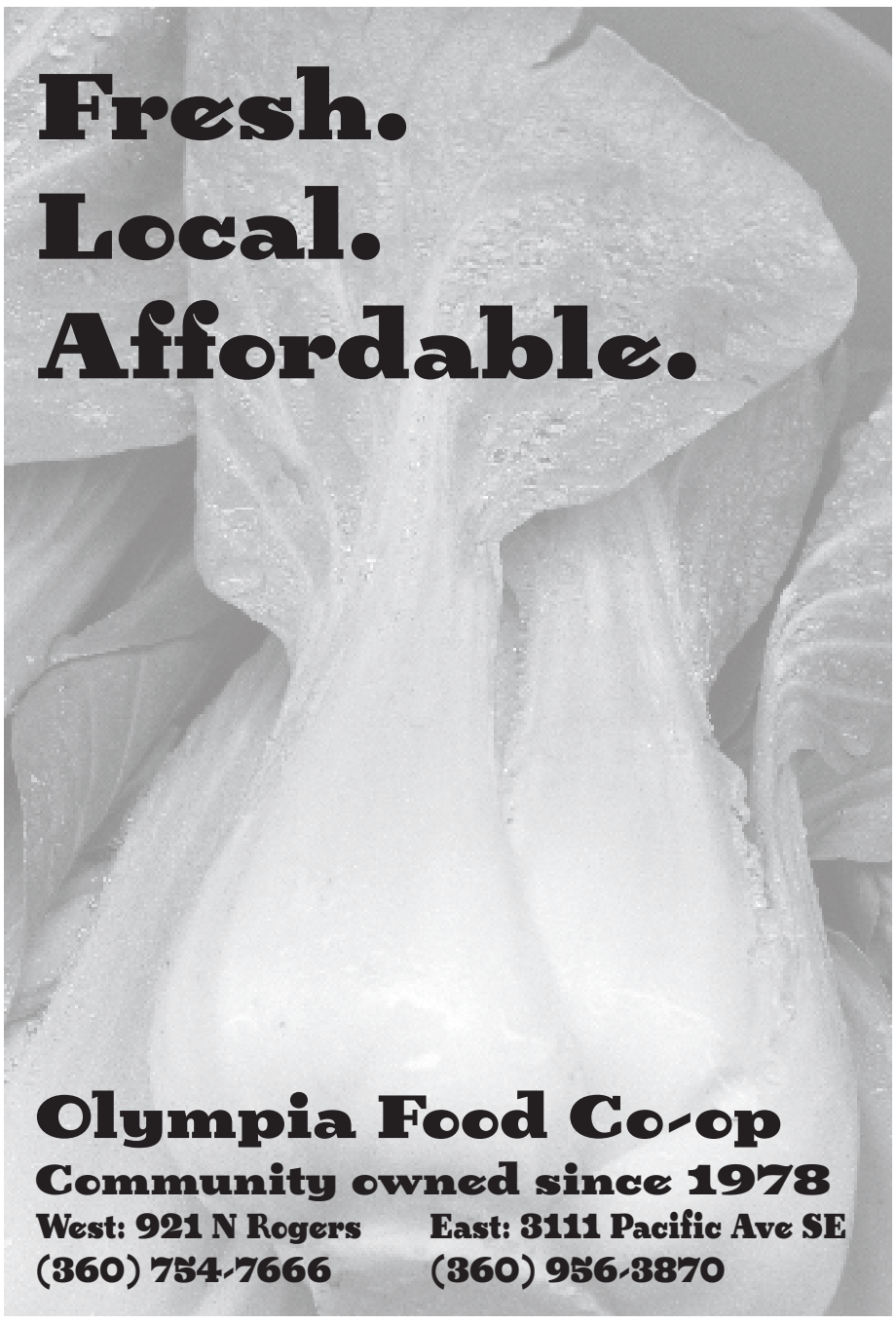

The Olympia Free Bus
Politics of mobility and transportation
An interview with local activist David Griffiths

Interview by Wally Cuddeford

Wally: *Thanks for chattin' with us about this. So let's start at the beginning. What exactly was the Olympia Free Bus?*

David: Well, back in '99, there was a ballot initiative that fall called I-695. It was written by a person named Tim Eyman, who I won't bother going into detail about. The idea behind this ballot initiative was to eliminate the motor vehicle excise tax and restructure vehicle registration fees, to change that from a sliding scale based on the value of the vehicle to a flat fee. Before, when it was on a sliding scale, people who drove more expensive cars paid more money for the privilege of driving them. If I remember correctly, the scale was from $10 at the bottom up to $200 at the top end. They decided it would be fair and reasonable and just to change that to a flat fee of $30. So the rich people who had been at the top went from paying $200 to $30, and the people on the other end of the spectrum, some of them could no longer afford to keep their vehicles. They had to stop driving. $30 may not sound like much, but if you have a hard time scraping together $10, $30 isn't gonna work for ya.

So a lot of people were upset by this initiative. And there was a group called the Alliance for Public Transportation. Their main focus seemed to be just trying to address the lack of funding resulting from the elimination of the excise tax. This tax had been the primary source of funding for public transportation in Washington State, and when that went away, transit systems all over the state lost a huge amount of their funding. Intercity Transit, for example, lost, I think, 42% of their operating budget. And so they had to eliminate a lot of routes, and cut back on their hours. One of the things they decided to do was to completely eliminate Sunday bus service. So the Alliance for Public Transportation, which I was involved with, they were all running around talking about "Funding cuts! Funding cuts!" And I was thinking "Okay, but what about the *service* cuts?"

The initiative was passed in November, of course, and went into effect at the end of the following February. So I was thinking, in Spring, there's gonna be a lot of people who are just *stuck*. What are we gonna do for them? What are we gonna do for these people in our community who are gonna be screwed by this, in a very real and direct way?

At the time, I had a van with a wheelchair lift, so I figured, well, I'll at least make my vehicle available, because I know there are gonna be people who need accessible transportation who aren't going to be able to get it. And so I got a few other people together, and we offered to try to fill in the gaps as best we could with our own vehicles, on our own time, and our own money. We started out running only on Sundays, and we tried to cover some of IT's existing routes. We ran one route in each direction, so I think we had the 41 covered up to the West Side and out to Evergreen, and we had one route into Lacey, and one into Tumwater. We tried to cover as many bases as we could.

So the service cuts went into effect at the end of February in 2000, and we'd been announcing that we were gonna be providing this service. I even went to IT to at least get their permission, or some kind of support or something. They told me they didn't want me to do it, and they also pointed out that it would be *illegal* for me to do it. I don't know if you're aware of this, but in Washington State, the whole public transportation industry is basically controlled by a network of state-granted monopolies. The state is divided into what they call "public transportation benefit areas," and there's one designated agency for each area. Anybody else who wants to provide any sort of public transportation service has to enter into an agreement with the designated agency for their benefit area.

Wally: *Even if that agency is providing no service on a particular day of the week, or time of day?*

David: Yup. It's *their* thing, and you have to get *their* permission. So that's what I tried to do. I went to their board, and I explained, you know, "I think we all know what the problem is. Here's what I'm proposing to do about it." And they basically said "Well, that's nice, but we don't trust you, and we don't want to risk getting sued because of something you're doing." I don't know how likely that ever really was, but that was their excuse.

> My van was, for those 13 weeks, the only wheelchair accessible public vehicle available anywhere in Thurston County on a Sunday.

Well, me being the kind of person I am, I said, Okay, that's nice. You can *say* it's illegal; I'm still gonna do it.

The day the service cuts took effect was a Sunday, and that was the first day that we operated. The day before, there was a rally in Sylvester Park, and a march up to the Capitol. Some people ended up throwing up a couple of 20-foot tall steel tripods on Capitol Way, you know, blocking Capitol. And they held it for, like four hours. As people were marching up to the Capitol, they were chanting things like "No justice, no peace! No buses, no streets!" If you take this away from the people, we're gonna try to take something back. I thought it was actually pretty cool that we had this action on Saturday, and then on Sunday, there was *another, different* type of direct action. We were drawing parallels between the two things, and pointing out that these were both types of direct action. Everybody thought that the thing with the tripods was sexy and cool and exciting, but I think what we were doing with the Free Bus was probably more effective and, you know, more radical in the truest sense of what it means.

> We got some attention from IT and their lawyers. They sent us a nasty letter saying "You're breaking the law, and we're ordering you to cease operation immediately."

Wally: *What kind of response did you get from people?*

David: People loved us! After just a couple of weeks, I remember seeing people waiting for us at IT stops. People would actually start cheering when they saw us driving by.

Wally: *So the buses were decorated then, so people could recognize them?*

David: We had signs. We got some vinyl sign material from a local business, and so we had bright yellow signs in our windows. Yeah, it was a pretty ghetto operation, vinyl signs taped up in our windows, but it worked.

After just a couple of weeks, we got coverage in the *Olympian*, and a TV crew came down from Seattle – I forget what channel it was, it might have been KIRO 7. They came down from Seattle and interviewed a couple of our drivers. And that got us a little bit more attention in the community. We got a call from a local business owner, who originally talked to one of our other drivers, and then I called back. The first time I talked to him over the phone, he said "I wanna let you know right up front I consider myself a hard-core right-wing conservative, and I get the impression you folks might not be, but that's okay. I wanna help you out because you're doing good work." And so, a local business owner, who will always remain anonymous at his request, gave us gas money and paid for us to have cell phones so we could switch from just covering a few routes to providing on-call service to wherever people needed us to be all over the whole tri-city area. So that was pretty cool.

And then, we got some more attention, from IT and their lawyers. They sent us a nasty letter saying "You're in violation of RCW blahblahblahblah." I don't remember what section it was. Anyway, they said "You're breaking the law, and we're ordering you to cease operation immediately, or we may be forced to pursue further legal action."

Again, me being the kind of person I am, we not only did not cease operation immediately, we made copies of the letter so that we could carry copies in all of our vehicles, and everybody we picked up, we told them "IT says we're breaking the law, and we want you to know that so you can make an informed choice whether you want to ride with us." No one turned us down, and in fact, *more* people started riding with us when they heard we were breaking the law. So I don't think that had the effect IT was hoping for. We just kept doing our thing.

And for, I think it was 13 weeks, we had the only public transportation available on Sundays, and for those 13 weeks, my van was the only wheelchair accessible public vehicle available anywhere in Thurston County on a Sunday.

Wally: *What were some other logistical considerations? Like, how many volunteers you had. And what were some things you didn't expect going in?*

David: Well, I didn't realize how difficult it would be just to take a bunch of people to different places and have all of them feel like their needs were being met in the way that they wanted. Probably, I really could have used a second person in the van to handle the map and phone and all of that. I was trying to do all of it, trying to figure out how to get this person to where they're going, and that person to where they're going, and trying to do all of that in areas of town where I'd never been, where I had no idea how to get there, and trying to figure that out, and take calls from more people, and then work in how to get where they are to pick them up and get them to where they're going, and doing all of that *while* I'm trying to drive on streets filled with idiots. Yeah, it was a little trickier than you might think.

Altogether we had about a dozen drivers, and not all of them drove all the time. When we first started out, when we were only running set routes, we tried to have two vehicles on each route so that we could run as often as possible. And then, when we went to the on-call service, we probably had the same number of people, so, yeah, I'd say at the most we had maybe a half dozen vehicles on the road at any one time. And even though most of the other drivers were only running on Sundays, I ended up just leaving the sign in my window, and if I was out in my van, I would be available for people who needed a ride.

Eventually, we sort of got into a routine where a lot of our customers, a lot of our riders, were people going to the free dinner at the Baptist Church downtown, and so we were helping a lot of people to get fed. Even though that wasn't what we set out to do, that became part of our thing. We were *the* transportation service for the free dinner.

We had one woman who went to the dinner with us who used a wheelchair, so she *needed* my van. And there was one week that my engine wouldn't start, and so I called her up and I said "I may not be able to pick you up today. If I can't get to you, do you have any other way to get dinner tonight?" And she said "No,

▸ **CONTINUED** on next page

acupuncture is pretty cool.

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WIP History

but that's okay. You don't need to worry about me." And I said, "No, I *am* gonna worry about you, and if I have to have somebody go down there and pick up a plate and *bring* it to you, we're gonna make sure you get dinner tonight." And she was just so blown away that somebody actually cared whether she had dinner. She called me up the next day and she said "I want to donate something, but I don't have any money. Can I give you some clothes?"

We had a lot of other people giving us what they could. I had old ladies walking up to me on the sidewalk. Here I am in a t-shirt with a black flag and a circle-A, and here's some little old lady "Oh, God bless you. You're doing such a wonderful thing. Here's $5 for gas."

It was a lot of fun, and it was really rewarding. Several people told us that we helped them to keep their jobs, because when IT stopped running, either on the route that they had been taking to work or people who worked on Sundays, they were afraid they were gonna lose their jobs because they couldn't get to work. And so we helped people in that way. And a couple people told us we helped them to not have to move for similar reasons. They were afraid they were gonna have to move somewhere else where they could get bus service.

One of the most amazing stories that I remember was one Sunday, our day started with a phone call early, early in the morning from a couple who was having a miscarriage, and they couldn't afford a taxi, and because they didn't have insurance they were afraid to call an ambulance. So the Oly Free Bus was their only ride to the hospital. Knowing we were able to do that for people, I'm still proud of that.

Wally: *How much of your gas money came from donations and how much of it was, I assume, out of pocket of the volunteer drivers themselves?*

David: Yeah, it was mostly just our own pocket money, whatever we could scrounge up. Whenever I was out doing stuff, you know, I was asking people for donations – not just waiting for people to come up and offer something, but I was actively seeking out whatever support I could get. And it was hard. Some of the money came from our riders, but it was the "Free Bus." The idea was we were providing the service free of charge. We hope the service we provide is worth something to you, and if you want to make a donation, you're more than welcome to do so. But of course, like I was saying, a lot of the people we were picking up didn't have a lot of money to spend. And so we got a lot of emotional support, a lot of encouragement, a lot of people saying "Right on! You're doing a really amazing thing, and I wish I could help, but..."

So ... mostly it was hustling. That was the long and short of it.

Eventually, IT reinstated Sunday service, and unfortunately, a lot of people didn't really understand the scope of the problem, and so they just thought that "Oh, IT is running on Sundays again, so the problem's fixed." But it wasn't. Then, after the ballot initiative had been ruled unconstitutional, for some reason, they didn't reinstate the motor vehicle excise tax. They kept the $30 tabs. But they said this was somehow unconstitutional, and so there was a reallocation of funding. IT actually got back more money than they had lost, but they still didn't reinstate all the services they cut. Instead, they ended up putting the money into more commuter service to Tacoma, and then "Oh, let's spend a whole bunch of money on surveillance cameras, and all this other shit that doesn't actually do anything to meet peoples' needs, but makes us look cool."

Wally: *What do you think the relevance of an action such as the Free Bus is, in an anti-capitalist grassroots political framework?*

David: Well, what I was thinking at the time, was all about community action, and doing something to address a larger problem on a scale where we could actually have an effect. And, you know, keep in mind this is early 2000, right after the WTO, so there was a lot of energy in the community toward mass action and coalition-building between groups addressing different kinds of issues, finding a common ground between all these different issues. And so we had people taking an interest in the Free Bus, not just for the obvious transportation issues, not just the obvious social and economic justice issues, but also people coming to us from an environmental perspective, because the ballot initiative had the effect of making it easier for more people to buy big gas-guzzling behemoths and spew poison into the air. So there was that perspective on it. And it was a labor thing, because transit systems were laying off bus drivers all over the state. I remember on our first flyers that we put up, we had a note at the bottom saying that the Oly Free Bus and the other groups that support us, "We support the laid off drivers and other workers from Intercity Transit." And I remember, because I was already a Wobbly at that time, I was trying to talk to bus drivers and trying to connect with people on that level, so there were all these different things going on that all sort of came together around this one point.

Like I said, we had the contrasting actions, with the road blockade, and then, you know, doing what I consider *real* direct action, because we're actually doing something that they tell us is against the law to meet the needs of the community. The point that I made a lot back then was about the Black Panthers. They did armed cop-watch, running around in public with shotguns and scaring a bunch of middle class white people, but the most truly revolutionary thing they did was feed kids breakfast. We can make all the noise and wave all the signs that we want to, but that's not gonna keep our kids from starving. People who want to do that are free to go ahead and do that, but we're gonna try and actually address the needs of real people in the community. So that's what that was about for me.

> The point that I made a lot back then was about the Black Panthers. They did armed cop-watch, but the most truly revolutionary thing they did was feed kids breakfast.

And even after the Oly Free Bus, under that name, stopped running, we were still providing transportation for people who needed it. And it sort of morphed into providing shuttle service for what became Camp Quixote, back when it was more of a guerilla shelter kind of project, and it was in a different location every night. We made it possible for people to be able to make use of a shelter that was in a different place every night, because all they had to do was get to the pick-up point, and then we would shuttle them to wherever they were gonna be sleeping that night.

Wally: *That's interesting. How long did that last?*

David: I don't remember. I think that was through the summer, at least.

People need to pay more attention to transportation. That's a much bigger thing than I think a lot of people realize. You know, I've kinda changed some of my thinking on transportation over the intervening years. At that time, I was thinking the most important, most effective, most radical thing that I could do was, you know, for me as a disabled person to provide transportation to other people in the community, whether they were disabled or not. I just really dug the idea of somebody who is traditionally seen as solely a recipient of those kinds of services turning around and providing the same service to other people. But now, I realize that probably the most effective thing that I could do is to transport myself in a way that I'm not dependent on anyone else, so I'm not a burden on the system or anything. I'm, you know, getting myself from point A to point B using my own energy, my own willpower. And riding my handcycle means that I'm not supporting the petroleum racket, I'm not supporting the insurance racket, I'm not supporting the automotive maintenance racket, and also since I'm in better shape and taking better care of myself, I'm not as likely to depend on the health care system, so I'm not supporting that racket.

Wally: *Or succumbing to that racket.*

David: Yeah. So this is like my one man multi-industry boycott, and I encourage everyone who thinks similarly to do the same thing.

Wally: *Any other thoughts on the Free Bus you'd like to share?*

David: Yeah, there were some things that I would do differently, if I were gonna do it again. Better publicity is definitely at the top of the list. On the one hand, I don't think we were able to serve as many people as we could have if we had publicized it more effectively. But on the other hand, considering how crazy a tactic it was just at the level we were at, if we had really done a lot more publicity and we had a lot more riders, I don't know, that might have just been too much to handle. I also wish we had been able to get more drivers and more people willing to actually participate in the thing. Like I said, we got a lot of emotional support and a lot of encouragement, a lot of "Right on!" But we could have used more people saying "Hey, this is a really great idea! What can I do to help? How can I get involved? How can I be a part of this?" I will admit, I was a little disappointed, actually, with the lack of participation.

But, you know, to balance that out, I think I first decided to try this not long before the ballot initiative passed. So that was early November, and I was thinking at that time, Hey, if this goes through, somebody should do something. And the service cuts took effect at the end of February, and so we had four months to put this together. From having the initial idea to going into effect, that was a little less than four months. I think we had our first actual planning meeting ... I don't think that happened until some time in December. So I guess the fact that we were able to do what we did on two months of preparation is impressive.

Wally: *People don't appreciate how much work something like that entails.*

David: Yeah. And mostly, it was sheer stubbornness on my part that made it happen. I mean, I don't want to take more credit than I deserve, because we had other people involved. Every one of them was vital to our success, but most of what made it happen was me saying "This needs to happen."

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A privatized Nakba

How new laws in Israel may herald the final expulsion of Palestinian refugees

by Charlotte Silver

Palestinians describe the amendment to the Israel Land Administration Law (ILA), quietly passed by the Israeli Knesset in 2009, as the final stage in the 62-year process of displacement from their homeland. The legislation is expected to have a long-term, disastrous impact on Palestinian lives and precludes the possibility of a negotiated resolution to the conflict.

This legislation builds on a gradual transition from a welfare-based government to one based on neoliberal policies that began in the 1980s. Recently, the evolution took a dramatic step, as Israel enacted laws that privatize its historically state-owned land. While very little media attention has been given to this development, this law has profound implications for Palestinians.

In contrast to most countries, Israel has retained state control over and ownership of the bulk of its land. During the establishment of the state in 1948, Israel expelled more than 700,000 Palestinians from approximately 400 villages and cities -- what Palestinians call the Nakba or catastrophe. Since then publicly-owned lands have accounted for 93 percent of the state's territory.

"The state nationalized all the land in 1948 in order to facilitate the misappropriation of Palestinians and the reallocation of land in favor of Jews," Shir Hever, an economist for the Alternative Information Center, commented to The Electronic Intifada.

Israel has operated a system wherein Israelis and Palestinians leased their property from the state. However, in August 2009, the Knesset made the first move to end this system by enacting the ILA, also referred to as the Land Reform Law. This law allows the state to transfer ownership of all developed land to an individual, private company or corporation. With egregious disregard for international law, Israel's Land Reform Law applies not only to land within Israel proper, but also to occupied East Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan Heights, which Israel annexed in violation of international law in 1981.

The passage of this bill has grave consequences for internally-displaced Palestinians living in Israel and Palestinian refugees everywhere. Palestinians have long maintained a legal claim to return to the land from which they were forcefully evicted from and have held on to the hope to do so.

> "This is the last phase. You confiscate, you use it for whatever you want; the last phase is to sell it." - Suhad Bishara

"This is the last phase"

"This is the last phase. You confiscate, you use it for whatever you want; the last phase is to sell it," Suhad Bishara, an attorney for the Israeli human and civil rights organization Adalah, said.

A significant portion of Israel's state-owned land was acquired through expropriation and confiscation of Palestinian property during and immediately following the 1948 dispossession. Through subsequent laws, most extensively through the Absentee Property Law (1950) and Land Acquisition Law (1953), Israel was able to systematically prevent the return of Palestinian refugees who fled or were expelled from their homes in 1948.

These confiscations have continued until the present day. For example, in order to obtain a building permit, one must enter into a lengthy, bureaucratically arduous and very costly process that presents an insurmountable obstacle for Palestinians to build "legally." This gives Israel the excuse to wantonly demolish Palestinian homes and confiscate their land.

As the seemingly endless peace negotiations continue into their 17th year, Israel has been quietly making plans to sell this very land.

"Privatizing all of these lands is basically ending this whole story. The state is not a stakeholder anymore. You have third parties -- who are individuals and companies -- who will have a say. Because they are the stakeholders, they are the owners of the land," Bishara added.

Economist Shir Hever explained that by redrawing property lines and changing the registry of the land, Palestinians will have an even more difficult time to assert their claim to the land or ask for compensation for it.

"The land reform will mainly affect Palestinians living inside Israel, and Palestinian refugees, because the re-drawing of property lines and the changing of the registry of land may be used as a tool to conceal the evidence for the previous Palestinian ownership of the land, and make it harder for refugees to demand their property back, or a suitable compensation," Hever said.

"This means you cannot ask for the properties back at any stage, once privatized," Bishara said.

Neoliberalism and ultra-nationalism

"The timing of the reform [bill] coincides with the very deep shift within Israel from a republican, strong-state model of an ultra-nationalist welfare state, into a new model of neoliberalism, while still keeping the ultra-nationalism," Hever said.

The stated intention of the Land Reform bill is to improve efficiency by decreasing government bureaucracy and its intrusion into free market activity. However, Hever refutes this as merely a guise. He explains that the decision to privatize land now is rooted in Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's desire to appeal to the upper class and real estate capitalists of the country in anticipation of an economic downturn within Israel that will mirror the western world's current economic woes.

"There are many ways to deal with inefficiency, and the 'free market' approach is only one out of many. It favors the rich and gives them the ability to manipulate the market by creating local monopolies. [For example,] once a real-estate tycoon has taken over all available land in a certain area, he or she can set the price for everyone who wishes to live there. That is the real reason for the reform, in my opinion -- Netanyahu needs the support of wealthy people who also fund his campaigns," Hever said.

The city of Jaffa provides a prescient example of the havoc that private development can wreak on the lives of the indigenous Palestinian population. Here, one can see how the neoliberal scheme can in itself be used as an ethnic cleansing device. Beginning in the 1960s, ILA sold the land of Jaffa to the highest bidders. This resulted in the proliferation of elegant and expensive condominium complexes and housing units along the desirable coastal land, pushing out the indigenous population to overcrowded and under-served neighborhoods.

According to Dr. Yosef Rafiq Jabareen, a senior lecturer at The Technion - Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa, the privatization of land in cities throughout Israel would spell the final stage of the forced expulsion of Palestinians from their homeland which began in 1948. With privatization, the property of Palestinians would go on sale to capitalists and developers.

According to Adalah, "The legislation would eventually lead to the transfer of ownership, even without payment, to Jewish leaseholders and to a "clearance" sale of what remains of Palestinian property in many cities in Israel, such as Jaffa, Ramla, Lod, Beer Sheva, Tiberias, Beit Shean, Haifa and Acre, as well as the Palestinian property in West Jerusalem. Thus, the Palestinian Nakba would be completed in these cities in the future when the Palestinian space that has existed for many generations would be finally eliminated and it would become a case of privatized real estate for the enjoyment of Jewish developers, tycoons and individuals" ("The Geo-Political and Spatial Implications of the New Israel Land Administration Law on the Palestinians" Adalah's Newsletter, Volume 62, July 2009).

However, the Land Reform Law goes beyond this prototype that uses free market competition as a tool to drive out Palestinian residents. Within the bill and a previous agreement with the Jewish National Fund (JNF), Israel has ensured that the organization will be a dominating and guiding influence on how land sale transactions will be carried out from now on.

Ensuring that land sales will go primarily to Jewish buyers, the Land Reform Law has restructured the ILA so that it yields considerable control to the JNF. The Land Authority Council will become the new government body that oversees the sale of state land. The JNF, an organization whose charter directly prohibits it from leasing any of its land to non-Jewish residents, will now hold 6 out of 13 of the membership slots of the Land Authority Council.

With the JNF solidifying power over the process of privatization, it is impossible to characterize this reform as devoid of a political agenda. Israel's plan to sell the land of Palestinian refugees as well as land in the occupied Golan Heights and East Jerusalem belies any of its feigned gestures toward engaging with the international community on a real solution for peace.

Charlotte Silver is a litigation assistant at the American Civil Liberties Union, Immigrant Rights Project and was active in the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement at Stanford. She lives in San Francisco.

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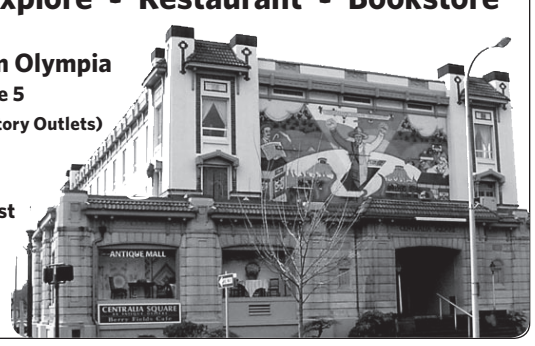

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Young Jews Disrupt Netanyahu Speech in New Orleans

by Jewish Voice for Peace

Nov 8: A group of young Jews with the Young Leadership Institute of Jewish Voice for Peace has traveled to the largest gathering of Jewish leaders in the US, the Jewish Federation General Assembly, to confront leaders on an approach to saving Israel's reputation and building young Jewish identity they say actually turns young Jews away.

Five of the young adults, including three Israelis and Israeli–Americans, disrupted a speech this morning by Israeli Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu with banners that said:

- Settlements delegitimize Israel
- Occupation delegitimizes Israel
- Siege of Gaza delegitimizes Israel
- Loyalty Oath delegitimizes Israel
- Silencing dissent delegitimizes Israel
- Settlements betray Jewish values
- Justice justice you shall pursue – Deuteronomy 16:20.

The young Jews faced a violent backlash from some audience members. Some audience members attempted to hit and gag Rae Abileah, a young Jewish protester. Three of the young Jews, Matan Cohen, Matthew Taylor and Emily Ratner, were temporarily detained, but not before they interrupted Netanyahu's speech five times with chants, and forced him to address them directly. Two of them were captured on the conference live TV feed as they were removed from the crowd. Flipcam footage will be available soon.

The young Jews' website, www.YoungJewishProud.org, presents the group's Young Jewish Declaration, a compelling vision of collective identity, purpose and values written as an invitation and call to action for peers who care about Israel and Palestine. It is also a strong challenge to elders.

These actions are in part a protest of the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) and Jewish Public Affairs Council (JCPA) newly announced $6 million dollar program to target campus, church, peace and human rights groups that are working to end Israel's human rights violations through nonviolent Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions pressure campaigns. The Federations and JCPA are calling this initiative the "Israel Action Network." Critics say it is a "Shoot the Messenger" approach.

"We're here to call out the elephant in the middle of the room. Israel continues to expropriate Palestinian land for Jewish-only communities, passes increasingly racist laws in the Knesset, the foreign minister wants to strip Palestinian citizens of their citizenship — these are the reasons Israel is becoming a pariah in the world, ***not*** *the human rights groups that are using nonviolent economic pressure to hold Israel accountable. We would be dismissing the values we were raised on if we did not speak up."* — Eitan Issacson, Israeli-American, Seattle

"The Jewish establishment thinks that all we want are free trips to Israel and feel-good service projects. That is in insult to our intelligence and to the Jewish values we were brought up on. What we want is for the American Jewish community to stand up and say that Israel's ongoing violations of Palestinian human rights are wrong and that we will not continue to support it with our dollars, our political strength and our moral abilities. We are the next generation of American Jews, proud of our heritage, strongly committed to Jewish life. We live our Jewish values in opposing Israel's human rights violations and we invite – no, implore –all Jews to join in this urgent struggle." — Hanna King, Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

"We were surprised by how many other young Jews were enthusiastic about the perspective that we brought to the General Assembly. It was scary to ask questions of sometimes hostile panelists, but in fact many people our age were supportive and even asked their own critical questions. We realized this is a terrific opportunity to organize." — Antonia House, graduate student, NYU

"Right now, the choice for those of us who care about the future of Israel and Palestine is between the status quo — which includes continued settlement expansion, the siege of Gaza, and the racist Israeli foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman– or Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions. Given that choice, Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions will win every time." — Matan Cohen, Israeli, Hampshire College

The students also announced the creation of a spoof Birthright Trip called Taglit-Lekulanu http://taglit-lekulanu.org/, Birthright for All, open to Palestinian and Jewish-Americans which they followed up with a spoof denial. The goal of the spoof was to highlight the one-sided narrative that Birthright presents, the ways it renders Palestinians invisible. The rebuttal laid bare the problematic assumptions underlying Birthright such as the emphasis on marrying Jews and procreating.

Participants in the institute include students from schools as diverse as UCLA, NYU, UC Berkeley, Hampshire, and Swarthmore. A new Jewish Voice for Peace campus chapter was recently started at Brandeis University.

TESC DIVEST UPDATE

On The Evergreen State College (TESC) campus divestment front the challenges keep on coming. At the recent TESC Board of Trustees meeting, several members of TESC Divest gave reasoned arguments for implementing the student vote to divest from companies profiting from Israel's illegal occupation, but the administration refused to budge. After the public comment period, Evergreen's president, Les Purce, reiterated his position on campus divestment.

> TESC, a college invested in companies profiting from war crimes, is not in a 'neutral position', but is intimately intertwined with the conflict.

Claiming that it would compromise the college's neutral position as a facilitator of an open debate, Purce made it clear that he has no intention of listening to the voice of the students. Of course, a college invested in companies profiting from war crimes is not in a 'neutral position', but is intimately intertwined with the conflict already. It's ironic, then, that Les Purce claims to be an adamant defender of open discussion on college campuses during the Palestinian Right to Education week, which is an international week of solidarity with Palestinian students who can't openly study because of Israel's checkpoints, the siege on Gaza and the apartheid wall.

TESC Divest highlighted this contradiction recently, with a week of speakers and events on campus and in the Olympia Community. On Monday, November 15th, Ramzy Baroud, a Palestinian-American author, journalist, and former producer for Al-Jazeera, spoke both on campus and at Traditions Cafe. On Thursday, November 18th, there was a political theater performance in Red Square on campus, where students and community members stood blindfolded by Israeli and American flags holding open books, symbolizing how Israel's occupation is keeping students from pursuing higher education. On Friday, November 19th, a panel discussion was held, featuring Stefanie Fox from Jewish Voice for Peace, Evergreen student Emily Weisberg, and Evergreen Professor Pete Bohmer.

We are busy at work building the next steps in this divestment campaign. Visit our website and watch for more information. www.tescdivest.org

The Young Jewish Declaration

A vision of collective identity, purpose and values written by and for young Jews committed to justice in Israel and Palestine. It is an invitation and call to action for both our peers and our elders, launched as a counter-protest at the 2010 Jewish Federation General Assembly in New Orleans.

I. We exist. We are everywhere. We speak and love and dream in every language. We pray three times a day or only during the high holidays or when we feel like we really need to or not at all. We are punks and students and parents and janitors and Rabbis and freedom fighters. We are your children, your nieces and nephews, your grandchildren. We embrace diaspora, even when it causes us a great deal of pain. We are the rubble of tangled fear, the deliverance of values. We are human. We are born perfect. We assimilate, or we do not. We are not apathetic. We know and name persecution when we see it. Occupation has constricted our throats and fattened our tongues. We are feeding each other new words. We have family, we build family, we are family. We re-negotiate. We atone. We re-draw the map every single day. We travel between worlds. This is not our birthright, it is our necessity.

II. We remember slavery in Egypt, and we remember hiding our celebrations and ritual. We remember brave, desperate resistance. We honor a legacy of radical intellectuals and refugees. We remember the labor movement. We remember the camps. We remember when we aged too quickly. We remember that we are still young, and powerful. We remember being branded as counter-revolutionaries in one state and hunted during the red scare of another. We remember our ancestors' suffering and our own. Our stories are older than any brutal war. We remember those who cannot afford to take time to heal. We remember how to build our homes, and our holiness, out of time and thin air, and so do not need other people's land to do so. We remember solidarity as a means of survival and an act of affirmation, and we are proud.

III. We refuse to have our histories distorted or erased, or appropriated by a corporate war machine. We will not call this liberation. We refuse to knowingly oppress others, and we refuse to oppress each other. We refuse to be whitewashed. We will not carry the legacy of terror. We refuse to allow our identities to be cut, cleaned, packaged nicely, and sold back to us. We won't be won over by free vacations and scholarship money. We won't buy the logic that slaughter means safety. We will not quietly witness the violation of human rights in Palestine. We refuse to become the mother who did not scream when wise King Solomon resolved to split her baby in two. We are better than this. We have ancestors to honor. We have allies to honor. We have ourselves to honor.

IV. We commit ourselves to peace. We will stand up with honest bodies, to offer honest bread. We will stand up with our words, our pens, our songs, our paintbrushes, our open hands. We commit to re-envisioning "homeland," to make room for justice. We will stand in the way of colonization and displacement. We will take this to the courts and to the streets. We will learn. We will teach this in the schools and in our homes. We will stand with you, if you choose to stand with our allies. We will grieve the lies we've swallowed. We commit to equality, solidarity, and integrity. We will soothe the deepest tangles of our roots and stretch our strong arms to the sky. We demand daylight for our stories, for all stories. We seek breathing room and dignity for all people. We are committed to the struggle. We are the struggle. We will become mentors, elders, and radical listeners for the next generation. It is our sacred obligation. We will not stop. We exist. We are young Jews, and we get to decide what that means.

The Young Jewish Declaration is a project created by young leaders within Jewish Voice for Peace, America's largest Jewish grassroots peace group dedicated to reaching a just peace between Israelis and Palestinians based on the principles of equality and international human rights law.

We work with activists in Palestine and Israel, and in broad coalition with other Jewish, Arab-American, faith-based, and peace and social justice organizations to support the aspirations of Israelis and Palestinians for justice, security and self-determination.

▸ **DANA,** continued from page 1

honest working people who are actually human, i.e. they love and care and share and all the other things that real humans do. The victims of the crime were the good honest working people who had been working all their lives to make their kid's life better and to try to enjoy a comfortable retirement. Most of them did absolutely nothing wrong. Most of them followed all the rules. Through no fault of their own many of these good honest working people just lost everything they had worked for all of their lives. Poof. It just disappeared. Wow. Where did it go? No one will say. In fact, no one will say it was stolen from them.

When a "common" person robs a store of some pocket change they will spend many years in prison if caught. The punishment meted out for the greatest grand larceny in all of human history was to take yet more trillions of tax-dollars from the good honest working people and give *that* to the thieves too. They punished not only the victims but also the victims' grandchildren in order to give more money to the thieves. I repeat: Wow. They had just stolen everyone's homes and pensions and now they were selling the country's future to a pawn shop so they could continue to pay themselves eight-figure bonuses.

And now the Federal Reserve just gives Goldman Sachs another $600 billion.

I repeat yet again: Wow. They are rolling in cash, yet they are still stealing everything else too. They are far from done. Let the foreclosures begin…

And the most incredible thing of all: *They are getting away with it!*

A few tens-of-thousands of people cannot tell six-billion people what to do unless most of those six-billion go along with it. While they have a lot of guns and while they have a lot of money, the fact is that there are a lot more of us than there are of them. Their guns are useless if there is no one to wield them. Their money is useless if no one honors it. I repeat: *A few tens-of-thousands of people cannot tell six-billion people what to do unless most of those six-billion go along with it. Get it?*

In 2005 I was sitting on a pretty good chunk of cash. I called all of my friends during that year and strongly suggested that they immediately sell their homes, close their bank accounts, put everything they had into gold, and then lay low for a few years. I had my own cash converted into gold. When I bought the gold in 2005 I paid a little over $400 an ounce. I sold it in 2008 for over $900. (It has since topped $1200). Both the American dollar and everyone's homes did not do so well. I am not any special genius who is smarter than all of the people on the TV machine who are telling everyone that everything is fine; I have just learned over the years that most of the people on the TV machine who are telling everyone what is going on are almost always completely wrong, but that there are also a few folks who do know what is going on and who are always right. I have learned to listen to those people.

To those of you who think the Democrats are going to save us: About 85% of the Democratic Party works for the thieves. They are in on it.

To those of you who think the Republicans are going to save us: About 99.9% of the Republican Party work for the thieves. They are also in on it, only more so.

The two co-chairs of the President's Commission on the Budget Deficit just made a preliminary report. It turns out that reducing the deficit was the last of seven priorities listed in the commission's statement of purpose. The first priority was listed as tax cuts. It should have been called "The President's Commission on Making Goldman Sachs Richer and Everyone Else Poorer." The rest of the recommendations issued by the two co-chairs of the Goldman Sachs Benefit Commission was the culmination of every dream and fantasy that the right-wing has ever had. They want to cut all programs and tax benefits for working people, including Social Security, Medicare, and tax breaks for children whilst simultaneously lowering taxes on corporations, speculators, and rich people. According to them everything from "tort reform" to defunding the CBC should be "on the table." The poor, the wheelchair-bound, the blind, and the mentally ill would all suffer greatly. Goldman Sachs would benefit greatly.

There are some who call our system "capitalism." The apologists for "capitalism" claim that under this system, productive people freely trade goods and services with each other. They claim this brings the most good to the most people. What actually happens is that useless parasites that produce nothing and do nothing but manipulate paper steal all of the wealth produced by the productive people and impoverish the productive people in the process. It brings all the good to a very small handful of people, and it totally sucks for everyone else.

How do they get away with this?

The first thing you need to understand is that the "media" is intentionally designed to deceive you. Five Super-Mega-Corporations own every major network and cable channel. Most of them are also war profiteers. If you want to know what is really going on the very first thing you need to do is to blow up your TV and throw away your paper. You need to understand that it is not so much that they lie — though they do — but that they fail to mention the most important and relevant facts. When prognosticating, they are almost always wrong about almost everything. Their entire purpose is to make everyone think things that are not true. They have largely succeeded in this.

There are a few people who do know what is going on. When prognosticating, they are almost always right about almost everything. Find them. Listen to them.

The thieves have owned all of the 'trusted' sources of 'information' for over thirty years now. As a result of this media monopoly the American people have been systematically brainwashed for nearly a generation. They simultaneously stopped teaching civics in public schools so that an entire generation of Americans grew up knowing nothing about the Constitution. As a result of all this, a huge proportion of the entire population are utterly certain of numerous "facts" that are actually the exact opposite of the actual truth. This was how an unnamed administration managed to get away with lying us into an illegal and disastrous war so that his cronies and contributors could loot the national treasuries of two nations and eventually destroy the economy along with hundreds-of-thousands of lives. Like Goldman Sachs, they also got away with it.

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The media is not "liberal." It is "corporate." This is why there were 200 reporters at a Tea Party event with only 600 participants while the 20,000 who attended the Social Forum in Detroit a week later were completely ignored. For thirty years the corporate media have drilled into everyone's head that government is bad and business is good. Make rich people richer, and that wealth will "trickle down" to everyone else. The problem was that this model had been the favored model through all human history, even though it has never ever worked before even one time. You live large for a while, but eventually the piper always comes to collect his due. This is because there is a pretty serious flaw in what Reagan called "Supply Side Economics," and what (before he became Reagan's vice president) George H.W. Bush called "Voodoo Economics": Supply is useless without demand. Demand is created by wages. The only thing to "trickle down" during this period was tinted yellow and had a foul odor. In spite of this, thanks to the pervasive and comforting lies everyone had been fed in their schools and on their TVs everyone believes in this crap, even though it had never worked before. People believe this crap even though history has proven over and over again that the complete opposite is actually true: When rich people get richer, everyone else gets poorer in inverse proportion. Always. Invariably. 100% of the time.

Both government and business are simply necessary. Either can be good or bad. Thanks to the pervasive and comforting lies everyone had been fed in their schools and on their TVs, it is now undisputed gospel that the government is our enemy and that business is our friend. The actual fact of the matter is that Super-Mega-Corporations tend to be sociopathic monsters who will unhesitatingly murder your family if there is enough profit in doing so, and as inefficient and corrupt as the government is they are still the only institution that is powerful enough to protect us from these predators. That is why they also stole our government. We need to take it back. If we get together we *can* take it back. In theory — and to a small extent in actual fact — the government is answerable to us. You can go stand outside your congressperson's office and complain to him. If he pisses off enough people it is even possible to vote him out of office, though the deck is stacked in that game and the odds are against you. But try going to the corporate office of a Wall Street CEO to complain. He will have you thrown into jail. The corporate form is a totalitarian dictatorship. That is why authoritarian dictators are so fond of it.

This is what we now have.

As for Barack Obama, when I understood that he was a serious candidate I did what I always do: I researched who was giving him money. When I saw that his top two contributors were Goldman Sachs and BP, this told me everything I needed to know about Barack Obama. Thus, I am evidently one of the only people in the country who is not outraged by or disappointed in or still deluded by Barack Obama. He has done just what I expected him to do: He has sold us out for the benefit of Wall Street. I tried to warn people, but they just got mad at me, so I just said wait and see.

I stand vindicated.

> As long as our government is for sale to the highest bidder we are never going to really fix anything else. This is the root of all the other problems our country faces.

History According to Dana

I find myself very frustrated with the content of the current political discourse because there is way too much ideology and there are way too many isms and there is not enough simply looking at the historical record and seeing what works and what doesn't. I have been studying history all my adult life, and while I can't really say history repeats itself, there are a large number of very obvious, repeated patterns. It does not require a genius to decipher them. I also understand that most people have not spent their lives studying history. Most would probably benefit. For those of you who have lives and who are too busy or whatever for such things, I will take the liberty of providing a brief history lesson:

▸ **CONTINUED** on next page

After the wave
by Matt Wuerker

From the mid-40s to the mid 70s we had a country full of factories that were making stuff and we had a country full of working people who were paid enough to buy all of the stuff that the factories were making. For over thirty years we experienced steady economic growth without one single boom or bust and with only one bank going under. *Everyone* made good money. We still had rich people; it is just that they were not as rich as they are now — nor did they need to be. My father raised four kids in a nice house with two cars, a boat, and half an airplane. He did this on a civil service engineer's salary. Mom stayed at home raising us. We took a two-week vacation every year. It is impossible to do this anymore.

What was the paradigm for this outrageous success? During this entire period we had the power of strong labor unions, balancing the power of corporations assuring a living wage and safe working conditions for the working people; we had a regulatory strait-jacket on all banks assuring that they would not gamble with our life savings; we had a tax rate of 90% on all personal income over the equivalent of $3 million so that business owners were more likely to reinvest profits back into their businesses and grow them rather than gambling in the Wall Street Casino. Right-wingers can scream all they want; the fact is, this paradigm not only worked, it worked well. The fact is that the right-wing corporate paradigm not only doesn't work, it is disastrous. Always. Every time it is tried. History proves this over and over and over again.

Our Golden Age ended thanks to policies implemented by Jimmy Carter, put on steroids by Ronald Reagan, and then carried on by every subsequent president — including Bill Clinton and Barack Obama. Labor unions were viciously attacked, the regulatory framework that so effectively protected us from the perfidy of Banksters was dismantled, and the tax-rate on the personal income of ultra-rich people was lowered from 90% to 27%. Almost immediately we re-entered the now familiar era of boom and bust cycles, bank failures, and unmitigated greed. Almost immediately we began experiencing the most massive redistribution of wealth from working people to the rich in all human history. Productivity continued to rise, but the wealth created by this productivity growth was not shared with the working people who actually created the increased productivity. It was instead diverted into the pockets of the thieves. Rather than raising the wages of working people, the Banksters kept the money themselves and then loaned it to the working people at outrageous interest rates, thus fleecing them even further.

When working people have more money, they buy things and contribute to the economy. When rich people have more money, they stop investing in their businesses and instead gamble in the Wall Street Casino and/or send their insane profits out of the country to off-shore tax havens and/or arm Third World dictators and/or fund Third World sweatshops. They drain our economy and eventually destroy it for their personal benefit. Always. Every time.

Dana's take on what to do next

We now have a once-in-a-generation opportunity. The Democrats have betrayed us and the Republicans are about to betray the Tea Party. Everyone on both sides of the political spectrum are seriously pissed about the economy. Up until now our only choices have been to be clubbed on the head by the Republicans or be stabbed in the back by the Democrats. The problem with challenging the Democrats from the left has always been that no one benefited from our doing this except the Republicans, who suck even more.

▸ **OPPORTUNITY,** continued on page 15

Understanding and responding to the global economic crisis

What should be done?

by Peter Bohmer

This is the third segment of a speech presented in Thessaloniki, Greece, September 8, 2010 at the A-Fest, Festival of the Anti-Authoritarians. The first two are available from the October and November issues of WIP at www.olywip.org.

If stonewalling financial reform and fiscal austerity will only make matters worse, what should be done? When they're unable to defend bad policies, advocates always resort to "TINA" – "There Is No Alternative." This is what Prime Minister George Papandreou and [Greek centrist political party] PASOK now claim in defense of caving in to financial speculators, the European Commission, and the IMF, and imposing an austerity budget on ordinary Greeks who did nothing to cause the economic crisis. Papandreou now claims fiscal austerity is regrettable but unavoidable. In the words of Bill Clinton, "he feels his fellow Greeks' pain." However, there is a better alternative for Greece, just as there is for the world at large.

(1) Instead of imposing wage freezes, reducing vacation and retirement benefits, and laying off public employees providing useful services and public goods, taxes should be raised on the wealthy, and financial transaction taxes should be levied to discourage speculative, destabilizing activity. Raising the value added tax [the European equivalent of a sales tax] is highly regressive. Going after taxi drivers for tax evasion is small change and petty. Tax evasion by wealthy Greeks is notorious, and forcing the wealthy to pay their fair share of taxes is where fiscal austerity and raising taxes should begin and end for the foreseeable future!

(2) Greece needs fiscal stimulus, not fiscal austerity, to pull its economy out of depression. Moreover, the world needs fiscal stimulus not fiscal austerity to end the current recession/depression. There will be an increase in unemployment and poverty in far more countries than Greece in the coming year. Governments everywhere, including Greece and the United States, should engage in aggressive fiscal stimulus, which means increased government spending and increased government deficits. Greece has every reason to be angry at Germany for not engaging in more fiscal stimulus, while Germany has no reason to criticize Greece for running a budget deficit -- since it should be! Right now Germany can borrow at very low interest rates to finance a deficit, or to lend to Greece, whereas financial speculators are forcing Greece to pay much more than warranted by any objective criterion. All the so-called PIGS – Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and Spain -- should unite and (a) refuse to accede to counterproductive demands that they engage in useless fiscal austerity, (b) demand that the stronger European economies like Germany launch strong fiscal stimuli as the best way to reduce unsustainable trade imbalances within the European Union and (c) demand underwriting protection from the EU sufficient to earn smaller EU countries reasonable interest rates to refinance their debt.

We should demand the European Union use its considerable powers to do what its citizens need it to do to engineer an economic recovery. The EU needs to insist on meaningful international financial reform at IMF and G-20 meetings, and on imposing restraints on those who would speculate at the expense of European governments who merely want to roll over their sovereign debts on reasonable terms. Unlike the Greek government, or the government of a small third world country, the EU has the power to stare down financial markets. What it lacks is the will to do so. The reason it lacks the will is that the EU governing institutions are more beholden to financial interests than they are to the EU citizens they are supposed to represent.

(3) In the words of former US Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson, who told the US Congress in October 2008 that they had no choice but to approve his $700 billion TARP bailout request for US banks because Congress was "already on the hook," this time it was Greece who had the stronger countries in the euro zone "on the hook." PASOK needed to take advantage of its leverage. Much of Greek debt is owed to banks from other European countries and Germany in particular. The euro would take a serious hit if Greece defaulted. After an incompetent delay which multiplied the size of the necessary bailout several times, German Chancellor Angela Merkel finally agreed to a bailout package to save Germany's own banks and protect its precious euro – certainly not to help Greek workers who German politicians and newspapers slander as lazy and greedy.

> Argentina tried internal devaluation, only to drive half its population into poverty. After devaluing and defaulting, Argentina's GDP climbed 63% over the next six years.

Had PASOK hung tough and defended the Greek economy against demands for greater austerity, they could have gotten financial backing on much better terms. PASOK was a lousy negotiator on behalf of Greek citizens and deserves to be fired for incompetence, as well as for trying to force Greek workers to tighten their belts to pay the bill for a party the previous conservative government threw for its wealthy Greek supporters. Big private banks are being bailed out at the expense of the people of Greece. Let us challenge this dominant narrative that puts the blame in the wrong place, on Greek workers and their benefits, and present our alternative - one that targets financialization.

Severe budget cuts are crippling the Greek economy. The European Union could roll over the debt without requiring these inhuman cuts and the increasing of the value added tax. There are advantages in defaulting on sovereign debt. The Russian economy was far better off after the government defaulted in 1998 than it would have been had they acceded to onerous IMF conditions in exchange for a bailout. The Argentine economy was in freefall before the government defaulted on international loans in 2001, but has enjoyed strong positive growth ever since. But of course when PASOK made clear to all that it would do anything international creditors and the European Commission demanded to avoid default, it lost any chance of securing favorable terms. Unless a government is willing to say "no" to a deal that should not be accepted there is no chance to secure a favorable outcome. People need to organize and mobilize to force the Greek government to repeal its austerity policies and cancel its onerous agreements with the IMF and European Central Bank and to seriously consider whether to partially or fully default on the government debt.

(4) Similarly, there are both advantages and disadvantages of being inside the euro zone. The principal advantage is a large and stable currency that is relatively – although not entirely -- immune from speculative attacks, and possibly lower interest rates when borrowing money. The chief disadvantage is Greece cannot devalue its currency relative to the stronger economies in the euro zone to reduce unsustainable trade imbalances. But for Greece it is becoming increasingly apparent that the disadvantages for maintaining the euro as its currency outweigh the advantages. And even if the advantages still outweigh the disadvantages now, it is better to leave the euro zone now, rather than agree to damage the economy severely for three years and have to leave the euro zone in any case -- which is what current policies will lead to. According to the calculations of IMF officials who helped negotiate the bailout deal, even if Greece carries out the austerity program to the letter, its sovereign debt will be even higher in three years than it is today!

If the EU will not offer Greece a way to grow out of the crisis, Greece is better off leaving the euro zone. From 1998 to 2001 Argentina tried what PASOK is trying now, internal devaluation, only to drive half its population into poverty. After devaluing and defaulting, Argentina's GDP dropped for one more quarter and then climbed 63% over the next six years.

A program of economic reform would be to coordinate economic stimulation across countries with increased public investment to provide "green jobs," to maintain wages and benefits for both public and private sector workers, to maintain and increase social programs and transfer payments to low income people, to impose substantial financial regulation, and to make the government the employer of last resort! That is a viable program in general, and a viable option for Greece as well. Greeks deserve a government committed to this option, which means a government willing to default and/or leave the euro zone if creditors and the EU are unwilling to provide the Greek people an opportunity to grow their way out of a crisis that was not of their making.

These significant improvements in economic policy will require a strong and militant movement committed to advancing and struggling for an economic program that puts people and their communities before profits and financial capital. To be successful, we need a high level of unity of popular movements including labor, within and across borders. Let us be inclusive in our movements. These economic reforms are worth struggling for. It is possible

▸ **GREECE,** continued on page 15

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Drunken Poetry
Last Word Books
211 East 4th Olympia
1st Monday of the Month 7:30-9:30pm

Readings operate on a first-come first-serve sign-up basis. Our time is limited so we're looking for something in the ballpark of three poems of moderate length or one long poem and one short from each reader.

Tuesday Read-Ins
Tuesdays, 5-7pm
Last Word Books
211 East 4th Olympia

Come on in, sit, read and drink free tea!

Volunteers Needed to Sort and Box Medical Supplies for Other Countries
Providence Health International / CHUMA, 2601 Willamette Drive NE, Suite G, Lacey

No experience is necessary. Volunteers must be ages 14 or above. CHUMA International (Catholic Health United for Medical Assistance) practices global solidarity and environmental stewardship by ensuring that useful medical supplies and equipment are shared with charitable health-care organizations in economically developing countries.

CHUMA has sent medical supplies to are Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Haiti, Cuba, Brazil, Uganda, and other countries. Help CHUMA's volunteer efforts locally. Contact Ray Reyes at 360-493-5641 or raymond.reyes@providence.org

Fellowship Of Reconciliation TV Programs
http://www.olympiafor.org/

If you live outside of Thurston County or if you don't have cable TV, you can watch more than 60 of Fellowship Of Reconciliation's recent TV programs on your computer! Visit www.olympiafor.org then click the link for TV Programs and click any program you want to watch. The November program is also at this link: http://www.blip.tv/file/4289904.

The December Program "Converting to a Peace Economy" explains how military spending damages the economy in systemic ways. Then it looks at possibilities for converting our economy toward civilian goods and services. It includes some references to Washington State's economy. The program is based on the extensive research done on this topic in late 1976 and early 1977. The economic principles are still valid. The dire predictions of what would happen if the U.S. continues our military economy have been coming true in the past 33 years.

Recurring Public Program: Memoir Writing Group
Tuesdays, 1-3 PM
State Capitol Museum,
211 21st Ave SW, Olympia,
360-753-2580

Beginning with a small but enthusiastic group of adults, the Memoir Writing Group at the State Capital Museum has been meeting regularly for nearly two years. The group explores the past through writing and assembling their memoirs. Led by Delores Kelso Nelson, a writer and teacher in the Olympia area for over 15 years, the memoir class serves participants by igniting lost memories, supporting practicing memoir writers, and offering a chance to socialize. Cost is $6 per class or 5 classes for $24

Peace Vigil in NW corner of Sylvester Park
Wednesdays 12-1 pm: Legion & Capitol Way

Please come for all or part of the hour to witness in a very friendly way for peace and nonviolence. We provide plenty of signs. The Olympia Fellowship Of Reconciliation has sponsored this since 1980. 360-491-9093, or glen@olympiafor.org

The Other Bank
Wednesdays 1:00-3:30pm
YWCA, 220 Union Ave SE, Olympia
360-352-0593

The YWCA Other Bank provides free hygiene and cleaning supplies to families in need -- items that cannot be purchased with food stamps and are not available at food banks, yet are essential for maintaining health and personal dignity. Items include: toilet paper, laundry and dish detergent, deodorant, shampoo, toothpaste, soap, tampons and pads, cleaning products, etc.

PLEASE DONATE! Donations can be dropped off Monday-Friday, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Stonewall Youth Support Groups
Wednesdays
4:30-6:30pm for 21 and under group
7-9pm for 18+ group.

Stonewall Youth is an organization of youth, activists, and allies that empowers lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQQIA) youth to speak for themselves, educate their communities, and support each other. Stonewall Youth envisions a community in which all queer, gender variant, and gender non-conforming youth have a full spectrum of choices regarding their bodies, self-expression, and legal rights. 360-705-2738 www.stonewallyouth.org info@stonewallyouth.org

Veterans for Peace airs a locally produced program
Wednesdays, 5 pm
Fridays, 9 - 10 pm
Thurston County TV (TCTV)

Info: Dennis Mills 360-867-1487
mills.dennis@comcast.net

"Parallel University"
Thursdays, 12 - 1 pm
KAOS 89.3 FM or kaos.evergreen.edu

Features interesting, informative programs about peace, social justice, the environment, progressive politics, and other alternative viewpoints. Info: parralleluniversity@yahoo.com

Percival Landing Peace Vigil
Fridays, 4:30-6pm
4th Avenue and Water Street, Olympia

All welcome to come to witness in a very friendly way for peace and nonviolence. We provide plenty of signs. The Olympia Fellowship Of Reconciliation has sponsored this since 1998. 360-491-9093 glen@olympiafor.org

"Women in Black" Silent Vigil for Peace
Every Friday from 5:00 to 6:00 pm:
South side of W. 4th Ave. near the fountain

Women only. Please wear black. Some signs are provided. Since 1988 "Women in Black" has been a loose network of women worldwide committed to peace with justice and actively opposed to war and violence. Info: Karin Kraft 754-5352 kraftkf@comcast.net

SPEECH Event - "As Long as the Rivers Run"
December 1st - Wednesday, 7pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

The South Puget Environmental Education Clearinghouse (SPEECH) will feature a film and panel discussion. The event will feature a showing of the historic tribal fishing rights movie, "As Long as the Rivers Run," produced by local filmmaker Carol Burns, and a panel of individuals to comment about the significance of this film to the South Sound area and beyond. "As Long as the Rivers Run" was filmed during the tumultuous 1960's and '70's, when Native Americans were fighting for their rights as guaranteed in the treaties in which they relinquished millions of acres of land, enabling Washington to become a state. Panelists will include the filmmaker Carol Burns, founding member of Thurston County Television; Charlene Krise of the Squaxin Island Tribe, Director of the Squaxin Research Center and Museum; Robert Satiacum, Jr., a Puyallup tribal member and son of one of the most famous activists of the time of the "fish ins" and a famous human rights activist in his own right as well as a radio host on KLAY Radio 1180 AM; Georgianna "Porgy" Kautz of the Nisqually Tribe, longtime natural resource manager for the Tribe, Commissioner to the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission and former Nisqually Chair and Councilmember; and Brian "Raven Redbone" Frisina, an activist for Native peoples and radio host for KAOS Radio's "Make No Bones About It."

Laughter Yoga! With Miss Kate
December 2nd – Thursday 6pm
Lecture Hall Rotunda at The Evergreen State College

Miss Kate (TESC '08) returns with the ultimate stress reliever for term's end: Laughter Yoga! Developed by an Indian M.D. yoga teacher, Laughter Yoga is a teachable practice for stress relief with serious results! Potluck at 5:30. For information: commonbread@gmail.com

Fundraiser Event for Father "Bix" Bichsel, Plowshares Activist
December 2nd - Thursday, 7pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

This is your chance to talk with Bix and support our heroic plowshares activists. The Plowshares 5 are headed to court just 5 days after the benefit to defend themselves against felony charges stemming from entering and praying on a nuclear base. We'll hear from Father Bill "Bix" Bichsel, who will talk about his life work as an activist, radical Jesuit priest fighting poverty in the heart of Tacoma, and his commitment to peace work through direct action that has led to over 50 arrests. After Bix gives a brief talk, there will be an opening drum, followed by performance from local folk activist/musician, the wonderful Danny Kelly.

Olympia Free Herbal Clinic's Winter Gala
December 3rd – Friday, 6:30-10:30pm
Eagles Ballroom, 805 4th ave, Olympia

Music by: Tattered Dress (Eleanor Murray and Pamela Margon), June Madrona, and Greta Jane Quartet
Come support the Oly Free Herbal Clinic at this benefit! There will be herbal cordials (alcoholic and non), beer, wine, luxurious desserts, and herbal body care products for sale. Will have a marvelous array of silent auction items this year, including a square dance package from Grizzle Grazzle, alpaca goodies from Traditions, and a massage from Radiance! Advance tickets available online at: http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/139026

Dana Lyons
December 3rd – Friday, 8pm
December 4th – Saturday, 8pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

Songs for the earth, songs of our well-meaning but often funny and inconsistent behavior, pokes at our social mores, incisive political critique - and for much of it we sing-along. We know that one night is just not enough time to cover all the bases, so we have two full nights. See you there.

Dignity Dialogues for the Community
December 4th - Saturday, 2pm
Olympia Unitarian Universalist Church
2300 East End ST. NW

A participatory forum for a true immigration reform that respects the dignity of our community. "Por la dignidad de nuestras familias, la reforma migratoria depende de ti. For the dignity of our families, immigration reform depends on you." Sponsored by Bridges Not Walls, Inmigrantes Unidos de Shelton, OUUC, AFSC, C2C, Community United for Dignity. Please come be part of this critical conversation and enjoy a bowl of delicious pozole too. Call (509) 833-6013 for more information.

Jazz Jam
December 5th - Sunday, 3-6pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

The Jazz community of the South Sound will hold a jazz jam. Free to all.

Lisa Ornstein & Dan Compton
December 5th, Sunday, 7pm

Lisa Ornsetin is widely known as one of the leading exponents of the fiddle playing of French Canada where she lived from 1978 to 1990. During that time, she played with the traditional band La Bottine Souriante. She comes to our stage with guitar and fiddle player Dan Compton, long known on the Pacific Northwest folk music scene.

Parents Organizing for Welfare and Economic Rights POWER Outage
December 6th – Monday, 6-8pm,
First Monday of every month,
Darby's Café, 407 N 5th Ave SW, Olympia

A gathering to do something special together with our community. Join us for a sign and prop painting party for our People's Summit and March to the Capitol on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on Monday, January 17, 2011. Potluck meal and onsite childcare provided. POWER is an organization of low-income parents and allies advocating for a strong social safety net while working toward a world where children and caregiving are truly valued and the devastation of poverty has been eradicated.

For more info: please contact POWER at: 360-352-9716, toll free at 1-866-343-9716, or at welfarerights@riseup.net Visit us at www.oly-wa.us/power. Find us on Myspace & Facebook.

Oly Songwriter Circle
December 7th – Tuesday, 7pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

Also, join Facebook to start connecting with Olympia Songwriters Circle. www.facebook.com/.../Olympia-Songwriters-Circle/108428469823

Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace (OMJP) Monthly Meeting
December 8th – Wednesday, 7pm
2nd & 4th Wednesdays

Work on a variety of global and local issues. Info: Larry 360-866-2404 lmosqueda@comcast.net

Earth Care
December 8th - Wednesday, 7pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

Video and discussion

Michael Mercker: Energy Healing Meditation
December 9th – Thursday 5:30pm
Longhouse at The Evergreen State College

After a delicious potluck, TESC alum, musician and healer Mike Mercker plays music & leads meditations to demonstrate our energetic potential. He is a 4th year student in Energy Healing, using skills of Earth Energy & Reiki.

Holiday Storytelling with Rebecca Hom
December 9th - Thursday, 7pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

Born into a long line of wild women, Rebecca carries on the tradition of exploring a wide world. Rebecca Hom, the BackRoads Teller, has traveled from farm fields to desert to rainforest; from Parisian cafés to China's Great Wall to Sarajevo's shell-pocked rubble. Migrating from Iowa farmlands to Alaskan fishing villages, eastern Oregon desert to western Washington rainforests, Rebecca has gained an intimate understanding of our shared human experience. She relates that intimacy through cultural understanding of the stories and insight into those who live these stories. Rebecca has worked as a forest worker, wildfire fighter, wildchild mother, literacy specialist and Alaskan Public Radio correspondent. She brings the wisdom of those diverse experiences to her performances and workshops.

Andrej Grubacic
Friday, December 10th
3pm at Evergreen, Seminar 2, A1105
7pm at Last Word Books, 211 4th Ave

Andrej Grubacic is a radical sociologist, an anarchist, an activist and a refugee from the former Yugoslavia. He has just released a book "Don't Mourn, Balkanize: Essays After Yugoslavia." He is also the co-author of the important and outstanding book, "Wobblies and Zapatistas." For more information, contact peterbohmer@yahoo.com http://blogs.evergreen.edu/bohmerp

THE HEARTSPARKLE PLAYERS Playback Theatre Performance
Stories of Healing in collaboration with The Olympia Free Herbal Clinic
December 10th – Friday, 7:30pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

The Olympia Free Herbal Clinic operates a drop-in clinic for individuals to receive free personalized health consultations with herbal practitioners. They empower people to take charge of their own health by providing herbal medicine and educating about herbal healthcare, medicinal plants, and harm reduction. Playback Theatre is a spontaneous collaboration between performers and audience. People tell moments from their lives, then watch them re-created with movement, music and dialogue. The clinic is located in the White Building in downtown Olympia at 209 4th Avenue, Suite 212. Office hours are Tuesdays from 3-7 p.m; Wednesdays from 5-7 p.m.; and Thursdays from 3-7 p.m. with Spanish translation available from 3-5 p.m.

Baby Gramps
December 11th - Saturday, 8pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

Blues, hillbilly tunes, ragtime, old-time (like early last century) pop tunes are some of what you might hear. Palindromes, tongue-twisters,

whimsy, cartoon caricature are a part of it. Convoluted yet rhythmic, gravelly yet smooth, every which way at once....well, of course it is hard to describe what Baby Gramps does..

Bridges Not Walls
December 12th - Sunday, 12-4pm
MIXX 96 building
State and Washington, downtown Olympia

Bridges Not Walls is a coalition of community members from the South Sound region of Washington State who have united to address issues of immigration in our community. We believe immigrants, regardless of legal status, deserve to be treated with dignity. We seek to make our communities a place where the contributions of immigrants are valued and respected. We oppose the fear and intimidation created by immigration enforcement in our region. Therefore, we work in solidarity with the immigrant communities in our area to promote human rights, economic rights and civil rights for all people. Call 360-943-8642 for more information.

Jung Society
December 12th - Sunday, 7pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

The C. G. Jung Society of Olympia meets second Sunday of the month. All meetings are open to the public. Each meeting focuses on a topic of interest to one of our members. Each member chooses the topic for the evening and prepares a presentation, in which all people attending participate.

Olympia Climate Action Monthly Meeting
December 13th – Monday, 7-9pm
2nd Monday of each month
MIXX 96 Meeting Room
State & Washington, Olympia

Olympia Climate Action is a group of local citizens who got together initially to plan and have Step It Up Day on April 14, 2007, which took place in Sylvester Park and Olympia Timberland Regional Library. After the event, the group decided to stay together and continue working on climate change in South Sound. The primary focus is on activities by Olympia Climate Action and related groups and on local and state climate-related actions, not the debates over climate change science or national and international events. Information: Barb, 360-878-9901

Duck the Malls Holiday Art and Craft Sale!
December 14 - Sat, 11:00 am – 4:00pm
Capitol Theater, 206 5th Avenue SE, Oly
360-754-6670
FREE Admission

Why go all the way to Portland when you can buy handmade in Olympia? Now in its 9th year, Duck the Malls at the Capitol Theater is the place to find the best crafts and art in the Northwest! A unique setting for a unique event, Duck the Malls is a benefit for the Olympia Film Society. It's also a way to support our awesome local artists by bringing together crafty people with those who appreciate cool handmade items that you will NOT find in the mall. Admission is free, the concession stand will be open, and there will also be homemade baked goods for sale. Discover the wonder and joy of craft in our community at Duck the Malls!

Citizen Open Forum at the Port of Shelton
December 14th – Tuesday, 6pm
Commissioners' Chambers, Port of Shelton
21 W Sanderson Way , Shelton

Come and be heard! No Biomass Incinerators! Mason County is in the process of deciding whether to approve the construction of a very large biomass incinerator in Mason County. Join with us to get answers and encourage our officials to consider the impact their decisions will have on families. Let our elected officials know how you feel.
www.concernedcitizensofshelton.org

South Sound Clean Clothes Campaign
December 14th – Tuesday, 7pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

This community group formed in 2000 to address sweatshop issues and has focused on getting public institutions to adopt sweatshop free purchasing practices. We meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month. For more info, go to www.southsoundcleanclothes.org

National Organization of Women Meeting
December 14th - Tuesday, 7pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

The National Organization for Women is the largest organization of feminist activists in the United States. Since founding in 1966, NOW's goal is "to take action" to bring about equality for all women.

Poetry night
December 15th - Wednesday, 6:30pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

Featured poet and open mic. Sponsored by the Olympia Poetry Network. Visit the website. http://home.comcast.net/~yake/opn.html

Awakening the Heart of Light:
December 16th – Thursday, 6pm
Longhouse at The Evergreen State College

What does the Solstice season mean? Christian, Jewish, Pagan symbols all celebrate the birth of an Inner Light, echoing Yoga & Buddhist metta meditation. Come awaken the heart; light a candle of hope! 5:30 potluck, Taize chant, heart-centered meditation.

Plants and Planets: Aligning with Celestial Influences
December 16th - 3rd Thursday of the Month, 6:45-8:15pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

A look at the month ahead and the celestial energies in store for us. We'll discuss how to support ourselves through the planetary transits with herbal medicines, gemstones, flower essences, and other gifts of the Earth. Come join this lively community happening, exploring how the big picture relates to our town and our lives.

Pandit Debi Prasad Chatterjee
December 17th - Friday, 8pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

Sitar master from India. He is on a visit to the Northwest and he is a well-known international musician and highly regarded teacher of Indian classical music. He is widely respected for his devotion to music and his control over the Ragas with systematic exploration which has placed him among the top instrumentalists of his era. He will be joined by a tabla player.

35th Annual Holiday Peace Vigil
December 18th – Saturday, 12-1pm
On West 4th Avenue near Heritage Fountain, Olympia

The annual vigil is an Olympia tradition. Signs are provided, but participants may bring their own. Children are welcome. Participants may enjoy free refreshments nearby after the vigil. "During this holiday season of joy and good will, let us set aside all violence and militarism, which are the opposites of joy and good will," said Glen Anderson, vigil organizer. "The vigil gives participants and passersby an opportunity to pause and consider choosing peace instead of violence. Peace is so much more consistent with the holiday spirit."

The vigil is sponsored by the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR). The Olympia FOR has worked nonviolently since 1976 on a variety of peace and social justice issues. It is the local affiliate of a broadly interfaith, international pacifist organization founded in 1914. The Olympia FOR has also sponsored a weekly peace vigil in Sylvester Park at the corner of Legion and Capitol Way, from 12 noon to 1 pm every Wednesday since March 5, 1980, and another vigil at the south end of Percival Landing from 4:30 to 6:00 pm every Friday since November 1998. The vigil is free, but the Olympia FOR will gratefully accept donations to support its persistent work for nonviolence, social justice and peace.

For information contact Glen Anderson at (360) 491-9093 or glen@olympiafor.org or visit the Olympia FOR's website at www.olympiafor.org

Bryan Bowers
December 18th - Saturday, 8pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

Bryan visits us each December or January and provides us the opportunity to listen, to sing, and to laugh as the stories roll out from this long-standing and widely-lauded performer. His virtuosity on autoharp and rousing vocals take him all over the country.

Open Drum Circle
December 21st - Tuesday, 7pm
Traditions Café, 5th & Water SW, Olympia
360-705-2819

Drumming and instruction

Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace (OMJP) Monthly Meeting
December 22nd – Wednesday, 7pm

Work on a variety of global and local issues. Info: Larry 360-866-2404 lmosqueda@comcast.net

▸ **OPPORTUNITY,** continued from page 13

However: We have a golden opportunity in the next election. There are now populist movements on *both* sides of the political divide. While the Tea Party was initiated by the thieves and while much of it is funded by the thieves, the individual Tea Party people that I have personally interacted with seemed honest if deluded. I think that the Republican Machine has possibly created a monster that is going to turn around and bite it on the butt. The Republican Party is about to betray the Tea Party in a pretty major way. This might mean that in the next election we can possibly strike both parties simultaneously from both sides. The "spoiler effect" will be largely cancelled out. We can spoil to our heart's content. There are more people ready for this than any other time in recent history. The Tea Partiers would possibly even coordinate with us on this. If we can actually replace a lot of incumbents on both sides of the aisle, I can't help but think that this will send a useful message. There is the inevitable fringe of racists and thieves in the Tea Party, but most of them would disapprove of making a living by destroying other peoples' lives if they knew what was going on. There is a big difference between stupidity and ignorance: Ignorance can be cured. Many Tea Partiers could probably be educated. One way or the other though, dealing with them would be far preferable to sticking our hands into Goldman Sachs' overflowing spittoon.

It is time to start tearing down the house. Everyone everywhere immediately needs to start preparing challenges to the existing power structure for the 2012 election. We need third and fourth parties. We need to call and educate and advocate and go door to door and fulminate and wheedle and beg. We need to start building momentum now, for this is not an easy task. The next election is our best chance. The next election is almost certainly our only chance. People are pissed. As long as our government is for sale to the highest bidder we are never going to really fix anything else. This is the root of all the other problems our country faces. Evil existed before corporations, but the corporate form has given it structure. The corporate form had made it more powerful than ever. They have simultaneously attacked us on so many fronts that we are scattered out in hundreds of battles, and the deck is stacked against us in every single one of them. Even when we win a token tactical victory here or there they begin undermining even that the next day.

Do you want some social justice? Do you want to save the environment? Do you want to clean up Puget Sound? Do you want to stop genetically engineered salmon? Until we take our government back, you are SOL. Until we take our government back we are never going to truly fix anything else. As long as our government is completely controlled by sociopathic monsters with almost unlimited funds you will continue to futilely beat your head against their wall. Corporate money is the foundation stone that everything else is built on. This is the issue that *everyone* needs to come together on. Now. We need to act. Now. The longer we wait the harder it will be. The Banksters are consolidating and preparing for some kind of end-game. We need our country back. There are a lot of people who are ready for this. Find them. Educate them. Inspire them. Let's do this.

Dana is a 50-something living in his truck on the streets of Olympia after BP put him out of business with their $4 gallon gas back in 2008. Dana has written several novels and has decided to become a rabble-rouser because, in his words, "it seems like it's our last chance to try to take our government back from the Corporatists."

▸ **GREECE,** continued from page 13

to win them.

Reform and Revolution

However, the problem is much more than neoliberalism; it is more than the power of banks and financial capital. Neoliberalism is more than just anti-labor and anti-environmental programs and policies promoted by influential foundations, intellectuals and corporate and political leaders that just happened to get their way in many nations and globally. Rather, it was a logical response by capital to the declining profit rates of the late 1960's and early 1970's. The problem facing humanity today is global capitalism not only the neoliberal variant of it. The so-called golden age of capitalism, the period after World War II until the 1970's still meant vast inequality on a national and global level, colonialism and neo-colonialism, imperialist wars like Vietnam, racism, alienated work for the majority, patriarchy, high rates of unemployment, dispossession of people from their land, environmental destruction, and a world dominated by the wealthy and multinational corporations. So in challenging the present let us not romanticize the past, e.g., Greece in the 1980's. Some forms of capitalism are more oppressive than others but they are all oppressive. Capitalism cannot be reformed into a humane and just and sustainable system. We must replace it.

Moreover, financial crises are an integral part, not only of neoliberalism, but also of capitalism, no matter what type. Financial crises and the interconnected major declines of employment, income and production, are continuing and unavoidable recurrences throughout the history of capitalism, and will continue to occur and destroy lives and communities and societies as long as capitalism continues.

We need to build movements that combine struggles for reformist and revolutionary change. For example, while demanding that social programs and public employment be maintained and increased, we should also demand community and worker control of these programs. In demanding full employment, we should simultaneously demand meaningful jobs that produce useful goods and services, and reduced hours at a living wage. While working on reforms, we should point out their limitations and also project and organize for and fight for a society and world of meaningful work and relations, for the end to poverty and hunger and inequality, for the end of racism and sexism, for climate justice and for a world in which we can live in harmony and cooperation with the environment and each other. Let us build our capacity and understanding to demand and go beyond social democracy. We need to construct alternatives to capitalism conceptually, in our institutions and in our practice.

Resistance to injustice and opposing capitalism are necessary but not sufficient. When some of my comrades in Olympia, Washington chant "Tear It Down" at our demonstrations and actions, I modify it to "Tear It Down, Build It Up".

In closing, I want to thank the people in Greece who are resisting in large numbers and militantly, against austerity and cutbacks. You are in a very difficult and serious situation, but your actions for economic justice are a beacon of hope and a signal to social movements and people all over the world who believe, "There is an Alternative" to the economic crisis. You are inspiring us. We also have a responsibility to support your struggle as we struggle for the liberation of our society. Your fight is also ours. SOLIDARITY!!

Peter Bohmer is faculty in Economics and Political Economy at the Evergreen State College.

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Long time WIP readers!

If you have old copies of WIP kicking around, we're looking for YOU!

The WIP crew is busily scanning our archive into our computers, turning these old print copies from 2004 and before into PDFs, to go with our digital copies that go back to 2005 (already available on the website). Our plan is to bring you a full digital archive of 20 years of social justice history in Olympia, finishing some time next year.

However, our own archive is incomplete! We're missing one issue entirely (January 2004), and we're looking for better copies of a few others. So if you have any pre-2005 WIPs kicking around, please email us at olywip@gmail.com soon. We'd be happy to give them a good home, or at least borrow a couple of them for a day.

Works in Progress
PO Box 295
Olympia WA 98507

"He said that his name was Captain America and he promised that we'd be together forever and then he disappeared."

December 2010 FREE

WORKS IN PROGRESS

SERVING THE SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY OF OLYMPIA SINCE 1990

Another bank bites the dust

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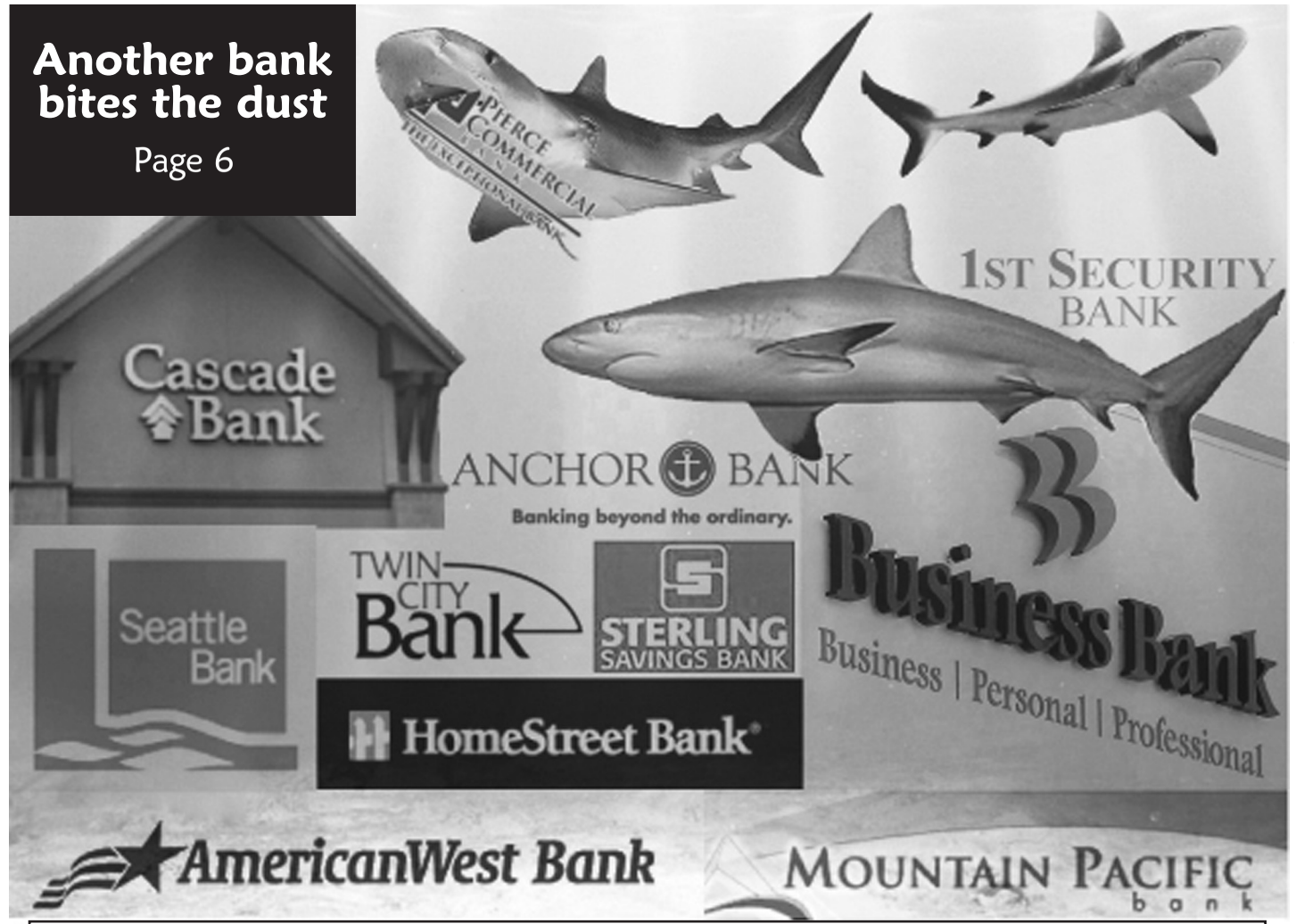

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